



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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CONTENTS

7 April 1993

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Inter-Arab Affairs

ICO Deplores Deteriorating Situation in Bosnia [Riyadh Radio] 1

Palestinian Affairs

Delegate, Envoy Comment on Joining Peace Talks 1
 Decision Still 'Difficult' [Amman Radio] 1
 Palestinians 'Disappointed' in U.S. [Cologne Radio] 1
 Abu-Nidal's FRC Accuses 'Arafat's Fatah of Assassination Attempt [VOL] 2
 'Arafat Receives EC Parliamentary Delegation [Algiers VOP] 2
 PLO's Sha'ith Says Arab Parties To Meet 16 Apr [AL-DUSTUR 3 Apr] 3
 'Arafat Receives Turkish Foreign Minister [Algiers VOP] 4
 PLO Announces Assassination of Palestinian Commander [Algiers VOP] 4
 Fayal al-Husayni on Israel's Closure of Territories [Milan IL GIORNALE 2 Apr] 4
 Unified National Leadership Urges Continuing Struggle [Algiers VOP] 5

ARAB AFRICA

Egypt

Further Reportage on President Mubarak's Trip 8
 Mubarak-Clinton News Conference [MENA] 8
 Leaves Washington for Paris [Cairo Radio] 11
 'Abd-al-Rahman Said Ready To Testify in Bombing [Voice of the Oppressed] 11
 Retrial of 'Abd-al-Rahman Postponed Until 8 Jun [MENA] 11
 More on Decision [AFP] 11
 Iran Reports 10 Killed by Police at Cairo University [Tehran Radio] 12
 Authorities Deny Report [MENA] 12

Libya

Official Finds Clinton Statement on Crisis 'Logical' [JANA] 12

Mauritania

Joint Communiqué Issued With Tunisian Leader [Nouakchott Radio] 12
 Bel Ali Concludes Visit [Tunis Radio] 14

Sudan

Al-Mahdi Released Following Interrogation [MENA] 14
 Garang on SPLA United, Problems Within SPLA [London International] 15
 Government Delegation Departs for Abuja Talks [Omdurman Radio] 16
 USC Chairman Asid Arrives for Visit [Omdurman Radio] 16
 Appeal Issued for Famine Relief—2.8 Million at Risk [AFP] 16

ARABIAN PENINSULA

GCC Ministers Decide on Damascus Declaration Meeting [WAKH] 17
 GCC Secretary General, Canadian MPs Review Economic Ties [SPA] 17

Kuwait

Military Maneuvers With U.S. Planned for Apr-May	[KUNA]	17
--	--------	----

Oman

Qabus Receives Yemen's al-Bid; Arrival Remarks Reported	[Muscat Radio]	17
---	----------------	----

Saudi Arabia

U.S. Paper's Claim on Saudi Aid To Sudan, Hamas Denied	[SPA]	17
Foreign Minister Meets Canadian Parliamentarians	[SPA]	18
Committee for Saudi-Moroccan Joint Commission Meets	[SPA]	18

Yemen

Al-Bid Departs for Oman Visit, Talks 6 Apr	[Sanaa Radio]	18
--	---------------	----

IRAQ

Regime 'Offensive' Said Repulsed in South	[Voice of Iraqi People]	19
Forces Continue 'Repressive' Actions in South	[Tehran Radio]	19
Explosion at 'Kurdistan Unity Party' Headquarters	[Voice of Kurdistan]	19
Explosions at Airport, Opposition Attacks	[Voice of Kurdistan]	19
Rebel Radio Says Targets in Baghdad Attacked	[Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution]	19
Saddam Addresses Group on U.S. Elections	[Baghdad Radio]	20
Saddam Chairs Meeting of Officials, Governors	[Baghdad Radio]	20
Saddam: Nation 'Will Not Bow' to Muslim Rulers	[INA]	20
INC Says Delegates To Meet Christopher	[AFP]	20
'Aziz Confers With Visiting Russian Delegation	[Baghdad Radio]	21

ISRAEL

Peres on Clinton-Mubarak Meeting, Territories	[Jerusalem TV]	22
Clinton 'Reinforces' Israeli Position	[Tel Aviv Radio]	23
U.S. Foils Arms Deal With 'Third World Country'	[HA'ARETZ 7 Apr]	23
Permanent Border Checkpoints for West Bank	[HA'ARETZ 7 Apr]	23
Palestinians To Work Inside Green Line 7 Apr	[Jerusalem Radio]	24
Minister Criticizes Rabin's Consent to Female Labor	[Jerusalem Radio]	24
Palestinians 'Biggest Losers' if Talks Boycotted	[Jerusalem Radio]	24
Deputy Minister, PLO Official View Terrorism	[Vienna DER STANDARD 5 Apr]	24
Al-Husayni May Head Peace Talks Delegation	[DAVAR 7 Apr]	25
West Bank Arab Killed by IDF Soldiers	[Jerusalem Radio]	26
Army Captures 2 Armed Fugitives in Strip 7 Apr	[Jerusalem Radio]	26
Police Open Civil Guard to Arab Volunteers	[Jerusalem Radio]	26
Libya Requests Permission for Clerics To Visit	[DAVAR 7 Apr]	26
Mubarak-Rabin Meeting 'Probably' 'Next Week'	[Jerusalem Radio]	27
'Sweeping Victory' for Netanyahu in Likud	[Jerusalem Radio]	27
Religious Movement Plans New Golan Settlement	[Jerusalem Radio]	27

JORDAN

King Husayn, Queen Nur Leave for United Kingdom	[Amman TV]	28
Royal Decree Endorses Press, Publications Law	[Amman Radio]	28
Premier Meets UAE, Qatari, Bahraini Ministers	[Amman TV]	28
Iraqi 'Terrorist' Centers Reportedly in Jordan	[NIDA' AL-RAFIDAYN 16 Mar]	28
U.S. Partnership in Peace Talks Questioned	[AL-DUSTUR 7 Apr]	29
Saudi Arabia's al-Fayiz Addresses Labor Conference	[SPA]	29

LEBANON

PLO's Fatah Fires Rockets at Israel	[AFP]	30
Further on Attack	[VOL]	30
U.S. Seeks To Equate 'National Struggle', Terrorism	[Voice of the Oppressed]	30

Syria Says No Dialogue With Ja'ja' [London AL-WASAT 5-11 Apr]	30
'Crisis' With Romania After Lebanese 'Harassed' [RFL]	31
U.S. Said Moving To Normalize Ties With Iraq [AL-SAFIR 31 Mar]	31

SYRIA

Reportage on Armenian Foreign Minister's Visit	33
Minister Arrives 4 Apr [Damascus Radio]	33
Al-Shar' Holds Official Talks [Damascus Radio]	33
Al-Asad Meets Minister [Damascus Radio]	33
SANA, AP Conclude Cooperation Agreement [SANA]	33

SOUTH ASIA

India

'Powerful' Explosion Damages Kanpur Building [Delhi Radio]	34
Dubayy-Based Indians Arrested in Bombay Bombing [Delhi Radio]	34
Situation Normal Along Line of Control [Delhi Radio]	34
Congress Loss in Tripura 'Due to Local Factors' [Delhi Radio]	34
Parliament, Assembly By-Election Schedule Noted [Delhi Radio]	34
PLO's Qaddumi, Rao on Return of Deportees [Delhi Radio]	34
Rao: No Statement on Temple-Mosque Issue [Delhi Radio]	35
Congress Leaders' 'Antiparty Activities' Queried [Delhi Radio]	35
Rao Leaves for 4-Day Visit to Thailand [Delhi Radio]	35
Power Projects With Foreign Investments Approved [Delhi Radio]	35
Cholera Deaths Blamed on Bangladeshis [AFP]	35

Iran

Commentary on Clinton, Mubarak Remarks on Terrorism [Tehran Radio]	35
Gulf Council Concluding Statement Called 'Absurd' [IRNA]	36
'Secret' Report Warns of Increased Opposition Activity [London AL-WASAT 5-11 Apr]	36
UN Envoy Says U.S. Stances Influenced by Israel [Tehran Radio]	37
Velayati, Azeri Minister Discuss Karabakh Conflict [Tehran Radio]	37
Peacekeeping Forces Seen as Needed in Karabakh [Tehran Radio]	37
Majles Deputies Condemn Armenian Aggression [IRNA]	38
Deputy Majles Speaker on Armenia, Gulf Talks [Tehran Radio]	38
Armenian Offensive Said To Increase Risk of Foreign Intervention [Tehran Radio]	38
Ties With Russia Said To Need New Stance on Serbs [JAHAN-E ISLAM 29 Mar]	39
* 'Crisis Staff' Formed To Handle Unexpected Events [London KEYHAN 18 Mar]	40
* Director of Gardun Magazine Acquitted [London KEYHAN 18 Mar]	40

Pakistan

Russian Foreign Minister Arrives 6 Apr [Islamabad Radio]	40
Fifth Minister Resigns From Sharif Cabinet [AFP]	40
Armenian 'Aggression' Against Azerbaijan Deplored [Islamabad Radio]	41
Ishaq Khan Expresses 'Solidarity' [Islamabad Radio]	41
U.S. Said Fueling Rift Between Top Officials [THE FRONTIER POST 7 Apr]	41
Minister Stresses 'Moral Support' for Kashmiris [Islamabad Radio]	41
Relief Goods for Bosnians Given to Envoy [Islamabad TV]	41
Bid To Declare Country Terrorist State Decried [PAKISTAN 4 Apr]	42
Sharif's Move To Abolish 8th Amendment Viewed [NAWA-I-WAQT 28 Mar]	42

Sri Lanka

Troops Attack LTTE Targets Outside Airbase [AFP]	43
President To Attend Dhaka SAARC Summit [Colombo Radio]	44
Japanese Government Pledges Increased Aid [LANKAPUVATH]	44
U.S. Aid for Market Development Welcomed [DAILY NEWS 26 Mar]	44
India To Share Satellite Data [DAILY NEWS 27 Mar]	45
Singapore Telecom Invests in Communications [Colombo International]	45

Inter-Arab Affairs

ICO Deplores Deteriorating Situation in Bosnia

LD0604214393 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] The Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] has expressed its strong and deep indignation and concern over the inhuman practices that have prevailed in eastern Bosnia, particularly in the Srebrenica area, in the attacks launched against the Muslims there.

In a statement issued today, ICO Secretary General Hamid Alghabid said that confirmed reports from the region, including the reports of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, indicate a horrifying deterioration in the inhuman situation there, which arouses profound grief. He added that the Muslim population of over 60,000 are suffering from severe winter conditions and are afflicted by skin and intestinal diseases, and that they have been left without shelter and exposed to Serbian shelling which is continually intensifying.

The ICO secretary general added that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees has been prevented from providing humanitarian aid to the besieged population, and that regular Serbian units are taking part in the attacks and hampering relief operations.

Palestinian Affairs

Delegate, Envoy Comment on Joining Peace Talks

Decision Still "Difficult"

JN0604181993 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1725 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] In Amman, a delegation of Palestinian figures, which attended the Palestinian leadership meetings in Tunis on 4 April, has expressed hope that Arab contacts currently under way with the U.S. Administration will produce a solution to the deportee issue.

Our correspondent for political affairs [Salim 'Ali Dhiyab] interviewed Dr. Ghassan al-Khatib [member of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks], who attended these meetings:

[Begin recording] [Al-Khatib] The general impression the Palestinian leaders have is that the U.S. and Israeli sides have thus far not provided the requirements needed for the adoption of a positive decision in favor of attending the negotiations, whether the requirements in question concern substantial issues in the negotiating process and Israeli stands—which have continued to contravene the terms of reference for the negotiations—or the deportee issue, which remains unresolved, not to mention the Israeli escalation and human rights violations in the occupied territories, which produce popular sentiments opposed to the peace process.

[Dhiyab] Palestinian as well as Arab moves on this issue are in the offing. What do you think of this? Do you have any expectations in this regard?

[Al-Khatib] Extensive Arab moves are currently under way. Several Arab delegations will visit Washington. Furthermore, President Hosni Mubarak is holding talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton. All these Arab endeavors are aimed at surmounting difficulties so that the negotiations may be resumed. It is our hope that these endeavors will be crowned with success. However, pending a successful conclusion to these endeavors, which is contingent upon meeting the aforementioned requirements, it is difficult for the Palestinian side to make a decision on the next round of talks. [end recording]

Palestinians "Disappointed" in U.S.

AU0704111993 Cologne Deutschlandfunk Network in German 0620 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Telephone interview with PLO representative to Bonn, 'Abdallah al-Franji, in Tunis, by Stefan Robine in Cologne—live]

[Text] [Robine] Egyptian President Mubarak paid a visit to the United States over the past few days and held talks with Secretary of State Christopher and President Clinton. The main topic was the revival of the Middle East peace talks. The issue is also being discussed at the PLO headquarters in Tunis, where I am connected with the PLO representative to Bonn. Good morning.

[Al-Franji] Good morning.

[Robine] Mr. Al-Franji, has the PLO leadership made a decision as to whether it will participate in the Middle East peace talks, which are to be resumed in Washington on 20 April?

[Al-Franji] No, we have not yet decided whether we will participate in the talks. Generally, the Palestinians are very disappointed with the United States—particularly with the new Administration, the new President, and his new secretary of state. During the visit to the United States by Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, they demonstrated that they are not only biased but that they also support Israel. Thus, one may doubt whether they can play a balanced role.

[Robine] Some Palestinian groups want to link participation in the Washington conference with the fate of the 400 Palestinians who have been deported to southern Lebanon. Does this apply to the PLO, too?

[Al-Franji] The PLO and all Palestinians cannot participate until this problem is resolved. The Palestinians were and still are of the opinion that UN Security Council decision No. 799 calls on Israel to allow the deportees to return. To this very day, Israel has been trying to avoid the implementation of this resolution. This is also a problem for the Palestinians because the 400 deportees have been outside their country for over

100 days. The resolutions of the UN Security Council endorse them and they can rely on moral support. Still, the Israelis do not act.

[Robine] Do you see any chance that the conference will be resumed in Washington on 20 April?

[Al-Franji] I do not believe that 20 April should be a sacred date. Talks must not necessarily begin on 20 April. The Americans are not necessarily the new gods of mankind. They must also make efforts to ensure progress concerning the issue of the deported Palestinians. One cannot simply tell the Palestinians in the occupied territories who have been waiting for results of progress in the peace process for over one year that talks will begin on 20 April. This is incorrect behavior on the part of the number one world power.

[Robine] Are there any signs from the other Arab states—Syria, Egypt, and Jordan—that they share your view?

[Al-Franji] I believe that the Arab states will not be in a position to attend the talks if the Palestinians do not participate. The Palestinians and the Arab states want peace. They do not want to play old maid. They also want the talks with the Israelis to yield results, and they want to live in peace, just like the Israelis. However, one cannot have peace at any cost in this region. A certain settlement is required that can be accepted by all sides, particularly by the Palestinians. We Palestinians believe that the Israelis are not yet willing to make peace with the Palestinians. We have shown that we are willing to recognize Israel. We have shown that we want to live together with the Israelis, that we want to live side by side, and that we also want to recognize the state of Israel, which was established by violating the rights of the Palestinians. However, all that has not produced any results so far.

[Robine] There is again a great deal of talk about peace at a time when numerous deaths—both of Israelis and Arabs—are reported every day in Israel. What influence do you think this escalation of violence has on the peace talks?

[Al-Franji] The violence is caused by the fact that the Israelis want to continue to live as an occupying power in the occupied territories, and that they are trying to implement their ideas with the use of force. The Israelis do not want to treat the Palestinians as equals. It has become clear that, even though the Palestinians do not have weapons and cannot wage an armed struggle, and even though they are weaker, the Israelis are not able to govern the Palestinians without losses. The Israelis have now discovered that not only has the number of dead Palestinians increased considerably but also the number of dead Israelis. This means that the Israelis are also suffering losses. I believe that the only way to stop the violence is to remove the Israeli occupying power from the occupied territories.

[Robine] President Mubarak was optimistic in Washington yesterday that Middle East peace talks may be concluded with a peace agreement by the end of the year. Do you share his optimism?

[Al-Franji] To be honest, I do not. We have often heard such optimistic statements by the Egyptian President Mubarak. We also heard optimistic statements by Rabin before the elections. So far, however, we have only seen violence and an escalation of violence between the Palestinians and the Israelis in this region. I hope—this is what all participants want—that we will achieve success. Yet, I do not believe that it will happen.

Abu-Nidal's FRC Accuses 'Arafat's Fatah of Assassination Attempt

NC0604170393 *Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic* 1615 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Fatah-the Revolutionary Council [FRC], led by Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna], has announced that the 'Arafat-led Fatah Movement today tried to assassinate Mahmud Rizq 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Tubasi, better known as al-Husayn Ibn-'Ali, who is one of its officials in Beirut.

The organization has refused to provide more details on the incident.

'Arafat Receives EC Parliamentary Delegation

LD0304134293 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic* 1702 GMT 2 Apr 93

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, today received the EC parliamentary delegation led by Claude Cheysson, chairman of the Arab Maghreb committee in the European Parliament. During the meeting he reviewed the latest developments of the peace process and the obstacles placed by the Government of Israel in the way of this process: the oppressive measures practiced by the occupation authorities, collective punishment, the isolation of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip from the world, the use of helicopter-mounted missiles to destroy Palestinian homes, in addition to the crime of collective banishment by the Rabin government of more than 400 Palestinians from their homeland.

The brother president, Abu-'Ammar, pointed to Israel's noncompliance with Resolutions 242 and 338, the exclusion of the issue of Jerusalem from the negotiations, and Israel's escalating violation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Brother Abu-'Ammar stressed the great importance of the EC playing an active role in the peace process, and said: We, the Palestinians, demand this.

Brother Abu-'Ammar also answered many questions by the European parliamentarians on many issues. The meeting was held in the presence of brothers Yasir

'Abd-Rabbuh, member of the PLO Executive Committee; Abu-J'afar, director-general of the PLO Political department; Dr. Sami Musallam, director of the office of brother president Abu-'Ammar; and Hayil al-Fahum, director of the Western Europe desk in the Political Department.

The brother president Abu-'Ammar made a statement after the meeting. He said that the latest developments in our Arab region and the Middle East and the Palestinian issues were discussed, especially the peace process and the importance of the existence of an active European role in this process that will have a basic effect on developments. In addition to the obstacles facing the peace process, including the issue of the deportees, there is the question of holy Jerusalem, the implementation of international resolutions, respect for human rights, and in particular the increasing oppression being practiced by the occupation authorities in the occupied land against the Palestinian people.

The percentage of children who have been martyred so far in the Intifadah is more than 60 percent of the number of martyrs in the last five years, and in particular in the recent period of Rabin's rule, in addition to the use of helicopter-mounted missiles against Palestinian homes.

Brother Abu-'Ammar added that the European parliamentarians promised to exert efforts to put an end to the deterioration of conditions in the occupied Palestinian territories. Brother Abu-'Ammar made it clear that there has been no progress in the American attitude because it is totally dependent on the Israeli attitude which is still marking time.

Brother Abu-'Ammar pointed out that the Palestinian leadership is now discussing the chances of the resumption of the peace process.

PLO's Sha'th Says Arab Parties To Meet 16 Apr

JN0304121993 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
3 Apr 93 p 4

["Text" of interview with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat by Yahya As'ad "after participating in the meeting held with the EC delegation, which visited the region last week"]

[Text] [As'ad] Have you directly contacted President Yasir 'Arafat since the meeting with the EC troika delegation?

[Sha'th] Yes. I informed him that the meeting was very important and positive. I believe that the European states are enthusiastic about playing a more positive role. They told us that their visit to Israel will be difficult because they are forced to play a difficult confrontational role. I conveyed their pledges to 'Arafat.

We explained to them some ambiguous points, our commitment to the peace process as a strategy, and our people's need for peace, genuine security, and justice.

[As'ad] Do you believe that Israel has achieved its declared objectives through the deportation?

[Sha'th] Some people believe that our enemy does not make mistakes. No, the deportation has greatly harmed Israel. It is a grave mistake that has harmed the peace process. None of Israel's objectives was achieved. The intifadah has escalated, the Palestinian and Arab stands rallied around the PLO, and Israel proposed unconditional withdrawal from Gaza.

[As'ad] What are the most recent proposals for resolving the problem of the deportees?

[Sha'th] All proposals are general; they are not written or signed articles. We do not want to fall again into verbal proposals such as the six points which received Christopher's verbal consent.

The promises not to expel people are neither sufficient nor can remove obstacles. There is still a great deal to be done to remove the obstacles to the resumption of the peace process.

[As'ad] What will happen if the deportees reject such solutions?

[Sha'th] The deportees reiterate that the most important accomplishment is not to resort to deportation again and to close the door on deportation. We also insist on this.

[As'ad] Do you believe that Israel is serious about withdrawal from Gaza?

[Sha'th] In the past, Israel's maneuvers were threats to occupy more lands. Now—thanks to the intifadah heroes and the steadfast Palestinian stand—they are threatening to withdraw without conditions. Israel withdrew from Lebanon without conditions thanks to the Lebanese-Palestinian resistance.

To Israel, we say the following: Do you threaten us with what we demand and that for which we struggle? If you withdraw from an inch of our land we will raise our flag on it and set up our national authority.

[As'ad] Two Israeli policemen were killed two days ago. To what extent do you support military action inside the occupied territory?

[Sha'th] The intifadah continued for several years with its own weapons. However, Rabin's ironfisted policy and the crime of deportation resulted in the use of firearms. The Israeli policy is, therefore, the cause of Palestinian violence.

There are two ways to ease violence. The first is political—that is, Israel must be ready to end the occupation; and the second is military—that is, the Israeli Army's withdrawal from the confrontation and the deployment

of international forces between the warring parties in preparation for a political solution.

I would like to reiterate that we made no commitments to stop the resistance of occupation. Most of the confrontations are waged against the occupation army and police. Meanwhile, most of our victims are Palestinian civilians.

[As'ad] Why does the PLO not exert more efforts in the negotiations with the Hamas Movement?

[Sha'th] We welcome Hamas in all the PLO institutions. We struggle to protect its leaders and cadres in Marj al-Zuhur or in any other place.

We want Hamas to raise the Palestinian flag in the Marj al-Zuhur camp. We want Hamas to proceed from being an organic part of Palestinian militant unity and to stop saying that the PLO does not represent the Palestinian people. Why do they cast doubts about the representation of the Palestinian people, and at the same time, want to enter the Palestine National Council? Is the representation percentage, which they want, behind their attempts to cast doubts?

[As'ad] You are an administrator and a politician. As an administrator, when will you advise the politicians to stop the negotiations with Israel?

[Sha'th] There are options and alternatives that should be presented when making a decision.

I would like to stress that we have not made any pledges to the enemy that we will continue the negotiations. However, we are very committed and have a good intention to render the peace process a success.

In my opinion, we still have much ahead before becoming fully convinced of the need to completely stop the peace process. We are fighting and negotiating simultaneously as happened in Vietnam, Algeria, and China.

[As'ad] Do you believe that Israel was pleased with the Trade World Center explosion in order to use it against the so-called Islamic fundamentalism and to maintain its position in the region?

[Sha'th] Yes. Israel has an interest in tarnishing the Islamic, Arab, and Palestinian reputation. The name of an Israeli girl appeared in the investigations, however she disappeared following the first days of the investigations. The role of the Israeli Mosad cannot be excluded from the operation.

[As'ad] You are now leaving for Tunisia. What will the Palestinian leadership discuss in its meeting at the beginning of this week?

[Sha'th] The leadership will make an assessment of the recent developments, particularly after the Damascus meeting, the meeting with the troika delegation, and the visit to the United States by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

After the leadership meetings, a Palestinian-Jordanian meeting will be held to evaluate the situation in preparation for the 16 April meeting of the foreign ministers of the Arab countries participating in the peace negotiations.

'Arafat Receives Turkish Foreign Minister

LD0304221793 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1702 GMT 3 Apr 93

[Text] Brother President Yasir 'Arafat received today Mr. Hikmet Cetin, the Turkish foreign minister, and his accompanying delegation. The Turkish minister conveyed the greetings of the Turkish president and the Turkish prime minister to the brother leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] and handed him an invitation to visit Turkey. Brother President Abu-'Ammar reviewed at the meeting the latest development in the peace process and Israel's obstacles to stall it, in particular Israel's lack of commitment to adherence to the terms of reference of the negotiations as stipulated in UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and its insistence on the exclusion of Jerusalem from the negotiations. [passage omitted] The Turkish minister reiterated his country's support for the Palestinian people's struggle to regain all its legitimate national rights and the establishment of its state, in particular, under the leadership of the PLO.

PLO Announces Assassination of Palestinian Commander

LD0304215193 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1702 GMT 3 Apr 93

[Text] The PLO, the Palestinian National Liberation Army, and Fatah announced today the martyrdom of hero Salah al-Din Abd al-Baqi Yunis Awwad, commander of the Beirut region and the Palestinian camps. The martyr hero fell after a life spent in fighting and struggle in the defense of our Palestinian people and its just struggle. He fell the day before yesterday, 1 April, under the bullets of the killer and hireling agents of Israeli intelligence.

The PLO, the Palestinian National Liberation Army, and Fatah pledged to the martyr hero to go on the same path on which he had been martyred until final victory and the establishment of the independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as capital.

Faysal al-Husayni on Israel's Closure of Territories

PM0504112693 *Milan IL GIORNALE in Italian*
2 Apr 93 p 13

[Interview with Faysal al-Husayni, head of the advisory committee to the Palestinian Delegation to the peace negotiations, by Simonetta Della Seta in Jerusalem; date not given]

[Excerpt] Jerusalem—[Passage omitted] [Della Seta] Some people actually judge the current storm to be

positive: Is it possible that by ordering total physical separation between the territories and the state of Israel, Prime Minister Rabin is offering you a golden opportunity to finally experiment with an economically independent entity of your own?

[Al-Husayni] It is difficult to call a situation of repression and suffering positive. Sealing off the territories and separating them from Jerusalem, which we consider to be an occupied area and they consider to be an integral part of the Jewish state, is causing enormous problems: Just imagine that thousands of Palestinian doctors, teachers, and pupils cannot get to this city to carry out their daily duties; also, tens of thousands of men employed within Israel's borders do not know how to feed their families. One hope remains, however. The present situation shows everybody, starting with the Israelis, that neither annexation nor occupation is a possible solution. The only alternative is to separate the two communities, and this drastic atmosphere could put pressure on the two sides to finally seek concrete solutions in that direction.

[Della Seta] So you are optimistic?

[Al-Husayni] I only hope that the bitterness felt by the Israelis in the last month, and the conclusions it has led them to, influence the authorities. In short, I hope that the divorce between us and the Jewish state today is considered inevitable, and thus closer, by the other side as well.

[Della Seta] Are you saying that both sides' experience of the difficulties of such an extreme situation could bring you to resume the Washington talks?

[Al-Husayni] It depends. If along with separation from Israel we are also allowed to develop alternative economic structures, to bring more money into our areas, and to promote independent projects, we will be encouraged to return to the negotiations. If, on the other hand, the Israelis decide to use sealing off the territories only as a punishment, preventing us working and opening up new paths, the answer will be negative.

[Della Seta] You represent the negotiating delegation and the moderate PLO position. In the Palestinian camp, however, several factions are pressing for violent, even armed, rebellion. Will you be able to keep the situation under control?

[Al-Husayni] We have succeeded so far, and I am convinced that we will continue to do so. But I would like to remind the Israelis of one thing. Our suffering today is mirrored in their society with the same risks. After suffering 15 casualties in a month, even among the least extremist Israeli insolent reactions to the Palestinians are emerging. The people shout out that we should be chased away, killed, expelled. In our areas, where suffering has been going on daily for five years, the same thing occurs toward the occupiers. And so the time has come to act, to take important steps to return to the negotiating

table, so that we do not lose control over our people, but also so that Rabin does not lose control over his.

[Della Seta] Give us an illustration.

[Al-Husayni] The Palestinians can no longer tolerate two things: the idea that at any moment Israel may deport them en masse from their land, and the idea of collective punishment. There, I am sure that if the Israelis show us they are not acting only out of revenge, and they promise us they will no longer use expulsion, we will go back to the negotiations. From a psychological viewpoint too, the more they show they are against our whole people, the more the people will be dragged into anti-Israeli feeling and will be led to approve of the extremist groups' violent actions.

[Della Seta] Did you find the Americans understanding on this point?

[Al-Husayni] Of course.

[Della Seta] So you expect them to take some steps as well?

[Al-Husayni] They are talking of changing from being mediators to becoming active partners in the talks: That way they will have to have access to and dialogue with all the other sides involved.

[Della Seta] Are you alluding to the United States opening up to the PLO once more?

[Al-Husayni] Yes, that will be essential.

[Della Seta] Do you not fear that resumption of the peace talks may unleash Palestinian terrorism against moderate internal targets as well as against Israel?

[Al-Husayni] In all societies there are dangers of this type and individuals ready to enact them. But I do not think that we will be seeing organized public attacks.

[Della Seta] Would you like to have at your disposal a Palestinian police force to counter these threats yourselves?

[Al-Husayni] That would certainly be a necessary thing: Our society suffers from much law-breaking.

Unified National Leadership Urges Continuing Struggle

LD0604204393 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1702 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Call No. 94 of Unified National Leadership of the Uprising: "Let the Attack Continue"]

[Text] O masses of our brave people, the heroic uprising is witnessing some qualitative revival, particularly in the steadfast Gaza Strip where the struggle process of our people continues, relying on a large mass gathering, armed with an unswerving will and challenging the policy of terrorism and repression practiced by Rabin's

government. The recent statements regarding the call for unilateral withdrawal from Gaza Strip confirm the depth of the impasse reached by the repressive policy of occupation due to the escalating resistance with all the means of struggle. Salute to the steel arms which advanced between the occupation soldiers and groups of settlers. Salute to the brave people of the uprising who swore to continue the path of the martyrs al-Qasam, Abu Jihad, Kanafani and al-Qasim, until they win freedom and independence.

In the face of this huge popular determination, with its rejection of co-existence with occupation and determination for liberation and independence, which have been expressed through the painful blows dealt by our children to the soldiers of occupation and its groups of settlers, the repressive occupation authorities resorted to a total blockade of the occupied territories in a desperate bid to put pressure on our struggling people and prevent them from stepping up their just and legitimate struggle by fighting them with their smallest means of subsistence and by starving them.

In this respect, we call on the masses of our people to embark on land farming and to promote social solidarity so as to turn this measure into a painful blow at the Israeli economy which relies to a large extent on our Arab workers in a number of important Israeli economic sectors.

We also call on our workers to refuse the issue of the interim work permits for a limited number of our male and female workers to suit the pressing interests of the enemy.

The Unified National Leadership of the Uprising [UNLU], while demanding that the international community provide international protection for our people in the face of these crimes which contravene the fundamental human rights, affirms that it is meaningless to talk about peace before providing such protection and before safeguarding the legitimate rights of our people's rights which are recognized by the international legitimacy, and first and foremost our people's right to return, decide their own destiny, and establish their independent state whose capital is holy Jerusalem, which is witnessing a suspicious Zionist campaign to Judaize and change its outlines by increasing the number of Jewish settlers in the city.

Heroic masses, while the Israeli government continues to dismiss the legality of the international legitimacy and its will and while it continues to refuse to implement UN Security Council Resolution 799 which calls for the immediate and safe return of the deportees at Tal al-Zuhur, the U.S. Administration continues its protection for Israel and continues to apply pressure on the Palestinian and Arab sides, bypassing resolution 799. This confirms the complete U.S. alignment with Israel and shows hostility to our people's rights. The United States has been trying at the same time to ensure the continuation of the military and economic siege against

the people of Iraq and the children of Iraq under the pretext of implementing the UN Security Council resolutions—a matter that confirms the attempt of the United States to subdue the Arab people and secure their complete submission to the U.S. will and the will of its strategic ally Israel.

O heroic masses; the economic policy of the Zionist entity is aimed at achieving the subservience of the occupied territories and making their economy an appendage to the Israeli economy so as to guarantee a boost to the Israeli economy and deprive our people of the means to build their own economic structures.

The brave intifadah has been able in recent years to attain some important achievements at the level of securing popular protection for several local products in the Palestinian markets. And at a time when several local products have been unable to occupy their place in the markets in adequately meeting the consumer needs of the population and the quality standards, the occupation authorities have recently been showing great interest in monopolizing Arab markets in the territories, thus enabling them to benefit from Israeli industrial capabilities and competitiveness; the occupation authorities have also shown readiness to offer some facilities to trade agents in order to deal a blow at local production and monopolize the market.

This calls for great vigilance to this growing phenomenon, and it requires that local factories seriously face the question of securing the protection of the consumer by improving the quality of local products and fixing their prices. It also requires that traders assume their responsibilities in protecting the local [Palestinian] economy. It also requires that the masses should not be lured by the consumer tendency which the occupation authorities are trying to deepen in our people's circles.

The UNLU stresses the following: The UNLU stresses its denunciation of the escalation of the repressive Israeli measures in the form of giving a free hand to soldiers and Israeli settlers to open fire, which means summary execution of the sons of our people for the simple reason of considering them as suspects. The UNLU calls on the international bodies and institutions to bear their responsibilities and stop the massacres and violations perpetrated by the occupation authorities against our steadfast people in its homeland.

The UNLU also stresses its attitude to the municipalities and rural councils appointed by the [Israeli] civil administration, and considers them an instrument of the [Israeli] authority.

On the fifth anniversary of the martyrdom of the hero commander Abu Jihad, the UNLU confirms that our people will remain loyal to the path of struggle taken by the fighting hero, and calls on the masses of our people to step up the struggle on this occasion.

At a time when the UNLU stresses its rejection of the structural plans being drawn up by the Zionist circles,

whether pertaining to our dear Jerusalem or the West Bank in general, as they are considered one of the authorities' methods of expropriating land and altering its features and reality, and consolidating the reality of Jewish settlement, the UNLU urges the international community to stand up to these attempts which contradict the Geneva agreements and the provisions of international law. It also warns Arab construction and contracting companies against operating within these plans, whether in the construction of roads, construction work in the settlements, or any other work pertaining to this issue. It also warns anyone who colludes with the authority in carrying out these plans in Jerusalem.

The UNLU emphasizes its firm attachment to the implementation of resolution 799 on the Palestinian deportees who are steadfast in Marj al-Zuhur. It stresses the stand of national and popular consensus on this matter, underscores its rejection of any formula for aborting this resolution and emptying it of its content, and calls on the international community to put pressure on Israel to secure its immediate submission in full to the international will, so as to preserve the credibility of international resolutions. The UNLU salutes the deportees, their families and sons.

The UNLU also congratulates the sons of our Christian people, with all their denominations, on the eve of Easter and Easter Saturday, urging them to show solidarity with the hero deportees and prisoners during their Easter festivities.

The UNLU announces the death of the Palestinian struggler Mahmud Abu Mazkur, who died of an incurable illness, while in a Zionist prison.

The UNLU reiterates its rejection of all dubious calls, which have been urging an end to heroic acts by our strugglers in exchange for an end to Israel's oppressive measures. The UNLU salutes the sons of Ramallah in exile following their initiative to hold their annual congress in the occupied homeland, and wishes them success. The UNLU urges all our communities in exile to strengthen their relations with the occupied homeland.

The UNLU calls on the masses of our people to be careful regarding the attempts of a number of suspect

people to sow sedition and problems between the sons of our people, and to face up to attempts by thieves and drugs gangs to shake the security of the citizens; it warns those wanton people that the people's long arm of justice will catch up with them.

The UNLU urges the need for stepping up the national struggle and intensifying the intifadah, which should be supported by mass popular participation. The UNLU reiterates the need for the people to rally behind the heroes of the intifadah and those who are on Israel's wanted list in their capacity as the intifadah's fida'yyin and its strong arm. The UNLU urges, furthermore, the need for deepening national and Islamic solidarity when confronting the fascism of colonialism, to deal further blows to the gangs of settlers and terrorists everywhere.

The UNLU reaffirms that transforming the occupation into a losing project, at all levels, is the guarantee for regaining our rights and is the most practical means for compelling colonialism to withdraw.

The UNLU greets you and at the same time calls on you to observe the following:

1. To step up and strengthen the uprising measures by organizing mass processions.
2. On 9 April, to hold a general strike on the occasion of the uprising entering its 65th month.
3. On 14 April, to organize mass processions and tumultuous confrontations with the occupation forces on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the martyrdom of the commander Abu Jihad.
4. On 17 April, Palestinian Captive Day, the UNLU calls for solidarity with the freedom prisoners and for this occasion to be marked by organizing various events. The UNLU extends militant salute to the prisoners of our people in the prisons of occupation. It stresses that our people are proud of them and that they are the vanguard of the fighters of our people.
5. On 25 April, to hold a general strike in solidarity with the prisoners of the Palestinian revolution. The 11, 18, and 24 April will be normal business days.

Egypt

Further Reportage on President Mubarak's Trip

Mubarak-Clinton News Conference

NC0604185593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1527 GMT
6 Apr 93

[Text] Washington, 6 Apr (MENA)—President Hosni Mubarak and U.S. President Bill Clinton held a news conference following their talks at the White House this afternoon.

Mubarak and Clinton dealt with several issues, especially the issue of peace in the Middle East.

At the beginning of the news conference, Mubarak delivered a statement in which he expressed his pleasure at meeting Clinton, saying the meeting was positive and productive. He added: We discussed issues of mutual interest for the peoples of the two countries in a spirit of friendship and mutual confidence.

Mubarak said: I affirmed to President Clinton that it is of utmost importance for our region to achieve a comprehensive and just settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbors, including the Palestinian people. In this connection, Mubarak stressed that any settlement must be based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the land-for-peace principle, and the achievement of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

Mubarak said: We believe Egypt and the United States can play a crucial role in bringing the peace talks to a successful conclusion. He said: Together we can get the parties to meet and bridge the gaps. Equally important is removing the remaining obstacles, especially those related to the Palestinian deportees.

Mubarak added that he was pleased to receive Clinton's assurance that he recognizes the importance of the Middle East peace talks. The U.S. President is committed to using the influence of the United States to achieve meaningful progress in these talks when they resume on 20 April. Mubarak added: We are confident that the talks will run smoothly and successfully.

Mubarak said: In addition to the peace process, we discussed a wide range of regional issues of concern for our two countries. We affirmed our interest in the stability of the Gulf region and the need for full compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions. No country in the region must doubt our firm commitment to help preserve the security, stability, and territorial unity of all friendly states. At the same, we are doing our utmost to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Mubarak said: As you are aware, Egypt has submitted a plan for making the region free of all weapons of mass destruction. We will pursue this goal with vigor and determination.

Mubarak added: On the world level, I offered to work closely with President Clinton to make the world more humane and equitable, a world where opportunities and hope exist for all and where people accept differences and employ diversity for the benefit of mankind.

Mubarak said he addresses this appeal because he is concerned that some elements in various societies reject ethnic diversity. This has resulted in unprecedented barbaric acts and suffering in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The world cannot tolerate the inhumane practices committed under the ugly slogan of ethnic cleansing. It is against all human values to see these claims emerge at the threshold of the 21st century.

Mubarak continued: Unfortunately, violence increasingly is being used by some misled elements in many parts of the world, including the Middle East. Acute social and economic problems are being exploited to spread violence and chaos. At the same time, foreign countries are interfering in the affairs of other countries under false pretexts. It is the duty of all civilized nations to fight the spread of violence and terrorism everywhere because these terrorist acts are a threat to humanity and its future. No country is immune or distant from this danger.

Mubarak announced that Egypt is dealing with this phenomenon through a comprehensive program that treats the fundamental causes of the problem. He said: We have begun an ambitious economic reform program. At the same time, we are consolidating our democratic system and safeguarding human rights. Our objective is to raise the standard of living for every Egyptian. We also are resolutely confronting foreign conspiracies and attempts to intervene in our affairs.

Mubarak emphasized that Egypt is not in danger and that recent media reports exaggerate what is happening in the country, declaring: As you know, news about violence has far-reaching echoes, but the real news is our confidence, unity, and increasing success in confronting this problem.

Mubarak affirmed that the Egyptians will not allow anyone to challenge their hospitality and traditional friendship with other countries. He said: We will cling to our culture. We are determined to solve problems peacefully and to repulse the forces of violence and aggression. Let the world know that Egypt is strong as ever and that its leadership is stable and confident.

Addressing Clinton, Mubarak said: As you have noted, Mr. President, Egypt appreciates its excellent relations with the United States. I seize this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for the support and assistance we receive from the United States which are vital to our economic reform program. I wish to stress that we wholeheartedly welcome all Americans visiting Egypt and encourage U.S. businessmen to invest in our country. The investment climate in Egypt is very favorable as a result of the economic reforms of the past few years. The budget deficit has been reduced from 13

percent in 1990 to 3.5 percent this year. Exchange rate restrictions have been abolished, and as a result we now possess record foreign currency reserves. Work is afoot to liberalize trade, especially as the Egyptian balance of payments is improving consistently. We have a \$3 billion surplus. In 1990, our balance of payments registered a deficit of \$2.6 billion.

Remarking that his talks with Clinton today revealed an extensive agreement of views on numerous issues, Mubarak announced: We have drawn up a comprehensive program for future cooperation.

Mubarak ended his statement by addressing Clinton, saying: I want to thank you for your understanding and responsiveness.

Mubarak voiced great appreciation for the warm welcome he was accorded and wished the U.S. people continued success and progress. He said he is looking forward to working closely with President Clinton in the next few months to further mutual objectives. He also invited him to visit Egypt whenever it is convenient.

Clinton began the joint news conference with a welcoming speech, and noted that he had an excellent meeting with Mubarak, adding that he looks forward to further meetings. Clinton said: I announce to this news conference that our first meeting was a success.

Clinton added that the United States and Egypt seek a stable and peaceful Middle East, noting that Egyptian and U.S. troops stood side by side during humanitarian missions and in the Gulf war, and that diplomats from the two countries worked together for the sake of peace with Israel. He remarked: I feel very confident following today's talks. Our views concerning a lasting Middle East peace are similar. We expect these views to be fulfilled.

Clinton remarked that Egypt has experience in peace and that peace is the only way to overcome all problems. He added: Egypt is the cornerstone of a just and complete settlement based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Peace is our goal, and we are aware of the principles of that peace—regional peace, the Palestinian people's rights, and security for all parties concerned for the sake of a lasting peace. As I have said, the United States is willing to undertake the responsibility of a full partner once all the parties concerned get together again at the negotiating table, he said.

In his statement, the U.S. President remarked that there currently is a historic opportunity to make further progress in the Middle East peace process. This opportunity should not be wasted; all parties should rise to the responsibility in order to achieve peace, he stressed.

Clinton added: We discussed the need to guarantee stability in the Gulf. Now that the Gulf war is over, all the parties should comply with all the UN Security Council resolutions. We, too, are committed to fighting and eliminating terrorism, because our countries have suffered from its consequences. We are determined to

chase terrorism everywhere by all means, because we realize the hazards involved in extremism, he said.

We are determined to confront Iran's involvement in terrorist operations and its opposition to the process to achieve peace in the Middle East, Clinton emphasized.

He added: Both our countries have suffered from the adverse effects of terrorism. We are both firmly determined to fight terrorists wherever they are. We reviewed the common threat resulting from religious extremism. We also discussed ways to bolster cooperation in facing this threat and all other forms of extremism, he said. He added that all religions agree with us in condemning terrorism.

Addressing President Mubarak, Clinton said: Your Excellency, you have undertaken a difficult task to reform and restructure Egypt's economy.

The news conference began with a question for Clinton on the situation in the Middle East and what he can do to improve it. Clinton replied: I am optimistic about the Middle East peace process because of the efforts I have made with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. I believe the peace talks will resume in April. There are encouraging signs that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will be persuaded. Al-Asad said he wants a comprehensive peace; he said that on Egyptian television. We have reason to believe we are making progress. President Mubarak can answer this question, Clinton said.

Mubarak said: I can say that I have met with many leaders in our region; not only the Syrian leader, but also the Palestinian and other Arab leaders. They all want to achieve peace as soon as possible, he said.

Mubarak added: The Syrian leader said clearly that he is eager to achieve peace. Peace will help every leader raise his people's standard of living. The Palestinians as well are fed up with the present situation; they are deprived of everything, he said. I have great hopes that the negotiations will begin on 20 April. We will work together to resolve this problem by the end of the year if we can.

Asked about the current events in Egypt, the relations between Muslims and Copts, and his policy of confronting this imported terrorism, Mubarak said: The majority of the Egyptians support me in any measures I take to end this kind of terrorism. The Copts, Muslims, and members of other religions are all Egyptians. We respect this. But there is a small minority that is trying to exploit the economic problems. You are aware that we have economic reform programs, which have some side effects. Some foreign parties, such as the Iranians, are trying to destabilize the country. Rest assured, however, that we are dealing with this very firmly and in accordance with the law. We will not violate the law. I believe the majority supports me. My best friends are Copts.

President Clinton was asked whether he is ready to pressure Rabin regarding the deportees issue, in accordance with what Mubarak was quoted as saying. He answered that he believes Israel has made great progress in its attempts to reaffirm that the Palestinians must attend the talks. Mubarak for his part will hold further talks with all the parties, including Israel.

Clinton said: We will wait and see what happens. But I believe Rabin has adopted a frank and clear stand in his attempt to reach an understanding with the Palestinians and the other parties. He expressed the belief this is enough to persuade the parties to return to negotiating table.

Answering the same question, Mubarak said: In fact, I did not use the word pressure on Rabin. We are holding positive contacts with Rabin and exchange views together.

Mubarak stressed that he will do everything to help restart the peace process and continue the talks. He said: I sent a message to Rabin when I was in London and before my arrival here in Washington. I intend to meet him. I discussed all this with President Clinton. I will continue this with Rabin following my return.

Clinton then answered a question regarding his stand on the Republicans' decision to try to delay a bill on aiding employment, which was attacked in the Senate.

Asked whether he has specific ideas on how to obtain Republican votes for the bill, the U.S. President said: I will work to prepare a proposal which I will submit to the Congress when it reconvenes. We will know whether the Republicans are committed to the course before the American people or playing a political game.

Asked about the kind of agreement he reached with Mubarak on the Libyan crisis with the West, Clinton said: The issue concerns our policy on Libya. He referred to what he called a great barrier that blocks everything else; that is, the U.S. determination to see that the persons implicated in the Pan Am 103 explosion leave Libya and face a legal and proper trial before raising any other question concerning Libya.

Clinton said that he discussed this issue with Mubarak today. He believes it is inevitable to press for harsher sanctions if the Libyan Government fails to hand over the suspects. There is considerable evidence against them, he remarked.

The U.S. President stressed the need to refer the suspects to trial and punish them if they are guilty. He also stressed that the trial should be legal and sound.

Clinton described this subject as a major one in the United States. Nothing can be resolved with Libya until this issue is settled, he affirmed.

The U.S. President was asked whether the United States could have used the information Egypt provided prior to the World Trade Center [WTC] explosion and whether it

would have been possible to prevent the explosion if this information had been handled differently. He replied that right now he does not know and that he has ordered a full review of all the information provided to the United States last year.

Clinton believes Mubarak agrees with him that the United States has tried to increase cooperation with Egypt in fighting international terrorism since he took office. He added that he sent U.S. officials to Egypt in February. They stayed there for a week and exchanged information. Today we talked about what we can do to enhance action, he said.

Clinton added: The main thing is that we know nothing specific about the WTC explosion. He remarked that cooperation has been enhanced and that a lot can be done in the future. The United States has to review many policies in view of what happened at the trade center to ensure that we are doing everything possible to curb the impact of terrorism on this country, he said.

Replying to the same question, Mubarak said: We had no specific information warning of what would happen at the World Trade Center. We had established positive cooperation with the United States in pursuing terrorists, but no one knew in advance what would happen at the WTC.

The president added: We exchanged information on the type of terrorism occurring here and there. We had no specific information, however; otherwise we would have alerted the Americans that this incident was to occur on that day, at that specific hour, and at that particular place.

The two leaders were asked about the threats undermining regional security in the Gulf and whether Iraq and Iran are equally to blame. President Mubarak replied that Iraq is only able to make verbal threats to another state, as it did when it said "Kuwait belongs to us." He added, however, that several measures are being adopted.

The president added: As for Iran, it is the only state in the arena right now, and being the strongest, the Iranians look for ways to shake stability in certain states, particularly Egypt.

As far as we are concerned, we are doing our best to confront this, he said. He added: This might be the main reason for the recent disturbances and other incidents in our country. The president expressed his belief that Iran is now doing its best to create problems. We are dealing with them very firmly, he said, adding: We are capable of several things and of dealing with them in the same manner. He remarked, however, that Egypt is not the state that interferes in the internal affairs of others.

Asked whether he had discussed with Mubarak specific measures that should be adopted concerning Iran's support for terrorism, Clinton said he does not think it is suitable to discuss this at present.

Responding to a question on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the U.S. President expressed his concern. He denied that his country plans to take further steps on the situation in that republic. If you believe that multi-lateral action should be taken regarding this problem, as the case was with Desert Storm, the opposite should be correct. The United States acts within the United Nations framework, and our views may not win all the time, he said, adding: Look how long it took us just to secure approval for a ban on flights over Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Clinton continued: It is a very difficult situation. The Europeans remember all the German troops deployed in what came to be known as Yugoslavia, which then disintegrated. It is a difficult situation. This is the most frustrating problem in the world today. He added: What I would like to make clear is that we have to work multilaterally through the United Nations.

The U.S. President added that he did his best to maintain strict sanctions, press for further measures, enforce a ban on flights over the area, and urge all the states concerned to do everything possible to guarantee success for that operation so that ethnic cleansing would not be rewarded in Bosnia or encouraged in other states.

Clinton concluded by saying that he does not believe the United States should or is able to take unilateral measures. He added that he knows a lot could still be done to cause some pain, but that it would cost a great deal and might not have much effect on the ultimate goal of improving the way the Bosnians live. Therefore, it is frustrating and difficult, he said.

Leaves Washington for Paris

NC0704063093 *Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 7 Apr 93*

[Text] President Husni Mubarak and his delegation left Washington early this morning for Paris. During his two-day visit to France, President Mubarak will hold talks with French President Francois Mitterrand and Prime Minister Edouard Balladur. We have learned that the Mubarak-Mitterrand talks will deal with developments in the Middle East and the ongoing efforts to promote the peace process. A French Foreign Ministry spokesman has stated that President Mubarak's visit to France, the third this year, proves the outstanding relations and continuing dialogue between Cairo and Paris.

'Abd-al-Rahman Said Ready To Testify in Bombing

NC0704061793 *Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0530 GMT 7 Apr 93*

[Text] Yesterday, Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, leader of the Islamic Jihad Organization [amir tanzim al-jihad al-islami], again condemned the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York. He said he is ready to testify in the case.

Asked about his ties with the suspects detained in the case, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman said he could not remember everyone he met in the United States. He added: I go to most mosques in the United States and know thousands of Muslims; I cannot possibly talk about them all. Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman challenged Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, who is visiting the United States, to rule Egypt for one hour without martial law.

Retrial of 'Abd-al-Rahman Postponed Until 8 Jun

NC0604143793 *Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 6 Apr 93*

[Text] Al-Fayyum, 6 Apr (MENA)—The Supreme State Security Court has decided to postpone until 8 June the retrial of al-Jihad Organization Mufti 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and 48 other defendants accused of participating in the al-Shuhada' Mosque incidents in al-Fayyum on 7 April 1989.

The court decided to postpone the retrial because the public prosecutor has not notified 'Abd-al-Rahman or defendants no. 4, 16, and 37 of the retrial.

The court decided that the public prosecutor should notify the defendants through legal channels, investigate 'Abd-al-Rahman's whereabouts, and notify him through diplomatic channels if it is proven he is residing abroad. The court also asked the public prosecutor to investigate the other defendants' whereabouts.

The Supreme State Security Court decided to release 11 defendants who attended the session.

The court held its session under the chairmanship of Counselor Ahmad 'Izzat al-'Ashmawi, with Counselors 'Abid Rajab al-Aswali and Muhammad Hilmi 'Abd-al-Nur attending.

More on Decision

NC0604181193 *Paris AFP in English 1700 GMT 6 Apr 93*

[Report by Mona Salem]

[Excerpts] Al-Fayyum, Egypt, April 6 (AFP)—The trial of the exiled spiritual leader of Egypt's militant al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [Islamic Group] was adjourned Tuesday amid charges from his followers that the government wants to prevent his return.

The trial of the blind Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, 55, opened under tight security in al-Fayyum, 100 kilometers (60 miles) southwest of Cairo but there were no reported incidents here despite threats of demonstrations by supporters of the fiery blind cleric.

But it was adjourned until June 8, at the request of both the defense and prosecution, to allow time for the legal procedure to call 'Abd-al-Rahman to return from abroad.

About 100 people, mostly journalists, lawyers and plainclothes policemen filled the small courtroom guarded by about 50 riot squad officers.

Defense lawyer Muntasir al-Zayyat complained that the defendants had no recourse to appeal but that the military governor could ratify the verdict, as he had to allow for the reopening of the trial.

Mamduh Ahmad Isma'il, a pro-Jama'ah lawyer jailed in the 1980s with 'Abd-al-Rahman following the assassination of president Anwar al-Sadat in 1981, said the trial was meant to prevent the cleric from returning to Egypt.

"It's a card the government wants to play at the right time," he said.

He said the decision would allow the government to call for 'Abd-al-Rahman's extradition from the United States, if that suited it, at some later date.

'Abd-al-Rahman is appealing a deportation order in the United States for failing to disclose he was a polygamist and had been convicted of falsifying a check in Egypt in 1987. [passage omitted]

The defendants here said they had appeared voluntarily before the court to prove their innocence.

'Abd-al-Rahman, who has lived in the United States since 1991, was to have been tried in absentia but the session was adjourned at the request of the defense and prosecution.

In Cairo, ten Muslim militants were arrested after a shootout with police near Cairo University where they had sought to demonstrate in support of the cleric. Thirty other alleged extremists were also arrested in the capital. [passage omitted]

Iran Reports 10 Killed by Police at Cairo University

NC0604183893 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic* 1630 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Egyptian police say they fired at a crowd of Islamists in front of Cairo University, killing 10. Egyptian security forces yesterday detained 20 Islamists in Cairo, al-Jizah, and Asyut.

Meanwhile, political prisoners held at the Abu-Za'bal, Turah, and al-Marj Prisons have declared a hunger strike to protest the Egyptian authorities' decision to ban visits by relatives.

According to IRNA, the Islamic Group in Egypt has called on the masses to wage demonstrations across the country in protest against the regime's repressive measures against the Islamists.

Authorities Deny Report

NC0704065793 *Cairo MENA in Arabic* 2150 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Cairo, 6 Apr (MENA)—A responsible Interior Ministry source has categorically denied reports by foreign news agencies about a shoot-out outside Cairo University today. The source explained that the security forces aborted an attempt by terrorist elements to enter the campus, incite students, and instigate them to stage violent demonstrations. He said this conduct by the terrorists was induced by the public and university students' denunciation of terrorism. The source said the police, helped by Cairo University students, apprehended 41 instigators through legal procedures. They were carrying knives, ammunition, and devices, which were sent to the criminology laboratory to determine their type. Those apprehended were referred to prosecution.

Libya

Official Finds Clinton Statement on Crisis 'Logical'

LD0704080393 *Tripoli JANA in Arabic* 0725 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Tripoli, 7 Apr (JANA)—A responsible source of the General People's Committee for the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has made an announcement in response to U.S. President Bill Clinton's statement on the crisis between the Great Jamahiriya and the Western countries made yesterday evening in Washington with President Husni Mubarak. The source said that the statement delivered by President Bill Clinton in this respect is a logical statement that accords with what the Great Jamahiriya has called for and has expressed in terms of practical steps, particularly in connection with the appearance of the Libyan citizens before an impartial and just court.

Mauritania

Joint Communique Issued With Tunisian Leader

AB0604230593 *Nouakchott ORTM Radio in French* 1930 GMT 6 Apr 93

["Communique" issued by President Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya and Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Nouakchott on 6 April, read by studio announcer — recorded]

[Text] At the invitation of His Excellency President Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, the president of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the president of the Republic of Tunisia, paid an official visit to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania from 14 to 15 [words indistinct] corresponding to 5 and 6 April 1993. The Tunisian president was accompanied by a high-level delegation.

This visit is part of an effort to strengthen fraternal ties of cooperation between our two brotherly countries in line with the (?laudable) traditions initiated by the two presidents and based on the principle of constant consultations and numerous meetings between Tunisian and Mauritanian officials.

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and his delegation were given popular official reception, an expression of sincere feeling of friendship and esteem which the president, the government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania have for President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and the brotherly Tunisian people.

The two delegations visited Nouadhibou where the Tunisian delegation familiarized itself with the operations of some establishments in the Mauritanian economic capital. The two presidents held a series of extensive discussions during which they reviewed bilateral relations and the ways and means of intensifying these relations and extending the areas of fruitful cooperation between our two countries.

They expressed satisfaction with the progress made so far in bilateral cooperation for the good of the two brotherly countries. The two countries stressed the need to intensify cooperation and to bring it to meet the aspirations of the two brotherly peoples to guarantee interdependence and to contribute to the building of a Maghreb without frontiers.

The two presidents reviewed the outcome of the fourth session of the Tunisia-Mauritania permanent joint commission, held in Tunis from 17 to 18 March (?1992). They gave instructions to strengthen and to further develop this cooperation in all fields.

In view of the two countries' current policy of economic openness, the two leaders strongly stressed the need to strengthen cooperation between the private sector and the employers organizations of the two countries through the creation of joint institutions in the commercial, industrial, agricultural, and fishing sectors.

The two presidents examined Maghreb, Arab, and international political issues of interest to the two countries and expressed satisfaction with their identity of viewpoints on the issues discussed. The two presidents stressed their determination to pursue the policy of consolidating the process of constructing a new Arab world, the ideal framework to meet the challenges confronting its peoples, and the best instrument for achieving the aspirations of the Maghreb people through interdependence, integration and attainment of goals affecting their common destiny.

In view of the fact that the Maghreb Arab Union constitutes the best guarantee for a strong and [word indistinct] complementary relations among the entire Arab Maghreb people, the two presidents expressed their determination to work together with their other brothers to speed up the Maghreb process through coordination among all the member countries of the Union.

They restated their conviction that complementary relations within the Maghreb is an important factor for consolidating their common (?interests).

They stressed the importance of improving the work and strengthening the resources of the general secretariat of the union and the other institutions so as to guarantee the implementation of decisions and accords and the execution of programs drawn up by the various organs of the union. The Mauritanian party expressed its confidence regarding the achievements that will be recorded during the currency of Tunisia's chairmanship and which will surely go a long way to consolidate the union process.

The two presidents restated the need to intensify contacts for a resumption of (?genuine) dialogue at all levels and as soon as possible with a view to transforming such contacts into an instrument of consultation and cooperation between members of the Arab Maghreb Union and the five European countries on the western basin of the Mediterranean capable of contributing to the resumption of dialogue between the Maghreb countries' group and the EEC countries in order that, together, the two groups may thus benefit from this dialogue, thereby establishing a complementary cooperation program between the Maghreb and Europe.

On the political situation in the region, the two presidents examined the crisis between Libya and some Western countries and the sustained efforts made by member countries of the union and their presidents regarding this question.

Concerning the efforts made by Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, current chairman of the union, and the mission entrusted to the secretary general of the Arab League and the secretary general of Arab Maghreb Union requiring them to contact the UN Security Council, which is preparing to hold a new meeting devoted to this problem, the two presidents made an urgent appeal for a pooling of efforts and goodwill with a view to a peaceful, honorable, and fair solution that would spare the region of any dangers and escalations and strengthen peace and security for all peoples of the region.

The two presidents examined the Arab situation and stressed the need to continue their efforts to establish confidence and concord in inter-Arab relations and to consolidate and reinforce these relations, taking into account the sovereignty of states and the similarity of interest on the basis of confidence and mutual respect. The two presidents expressed their support for the efforts being made for a resumption of the Middle East peace talks with the participation of all Arab parties. They expressed their concern over the escalating repression and the confinement being undertaken by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. They stressed the need for Israel to respect UN resolutions, including that on the return of Palestinian deportees, and subscribe to the international [word indistinct] for the relinquishing of all occupied

Arab territories and to the search for a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian question in keeping with international law in order to guarantee the restoration of overall lasting peace in the Middle East.

Touching on Arab-African cooperation, the two presidents noted the importance of the latter and reaffirmed their desire to consolidate the solidarity between the Arab and African peoples in order to strengthen the historical bonds of civilization which bind them and in order to serve their mutual interests.

Touching on the situation in South Africa, the two presidents expressed satisfaction with new developments in that country and expressed the hope that a nonracial transitional government will be formed to prepare the creation of a nonracial regime founded on the rules of democracy and equity.

The two president expressed their satisfaction with the actions undertaken for reconciliation between the parties in conflict in Somalia and urged them to the use their wisdom by approving the UN efforts to restore security and stability in that sister country.

Concerning the tragic situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, whose propel are being destroyed in an ethnic cleansing operation, embargoes, and acts contrary to the elementary rules of human rights, the two presidents condemned these barbarous acts and called for the continuation of international efforts to make the Serbs accept the peace plan agreed to by the other parties, accept the international resolutions, and respect the independence of Bosnia- Herzegovina, and protect the inhabitants against any threats.

The two presidents expressed satisfaction with the reconciliation among the Afghan combatant factions. With the help of the Keeper of the Holy Places, King Fahd Bin'-Abd-al-'Aziz, they called on the parties involved to respect the agreements and to work toward the reconstruction of that country.

The two presidents examined cooperation among Islamic States within the framework of the Islamic Conference Organization and agreed to continue to hold consultations and coordinate their efforts for the solution of issues affecting the Islamic world.

On the other hand, the two parties reviewed the international economic situation and expressed the need to strengthen North-South cooperation in order to reduce the debt burden that has become too heavy for developing countries, impeding their progress and preventing the creation of a new world economic order based on solidarity, justice, and democracy. They expressed the conviction that democracy, development, and international cooperation go together. They stressed the importance of the establishment of new relations between the North and the South through the intensification of investments through partnership, the suppression of

debt, and the orientation of debt servicing toward development programs, safeguarding the environment, and social stability.

His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali expressed his full satisfaction and thanks for the warm reception and the authentic generosity accorded him and his delegation. This solidified the ties of brotherhood and friendship uniting the two sister countries. He expressed his consideration and admiration for the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania under the leadership of His Excellency Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya and the important gains in the democratic process and on the path of its general development.

His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali invited his brother, His Excellency President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, to pay an official visit to the Tunisian Republic. This invitation was accepted with pleasure and the date will be fixed later.

Issued in Nouakchott on 6 April.

For the Tunisian Republic, Habib Ben Yahya, minister of foreign affairs,

For the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Mohamed Abdrahmane Ould Moine, minister of foreign affairs and cooperation.

Bel Ali Concludes Visit

LD0604184393 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Excerpt] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali left Nouadibou Airport for Tunis at 1345 today at the end of a two-day official visit to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, made at the invitation of President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Al-Mahdi Released Following Interrogation

NC0604160493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1503 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Khartoum, 6 Apr (MENA)—A responsible source in the Sudanese Public Security Department has stated that former Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi was summoned yesterday to the security services' offices, where he was interrogated about his political activity and hostile moves, as the source put it. Al-Mahdi was then released.

Meanwhile, al-Mahdi has released a leaflet in which he accuses the Sudanese Government of bringing a woman and her 14-year-old son to Sudan from Britain on the pretext that he is married to her and that the boy is his son. Al-Mahdi accused the woman of madness.

The weekly newspaper AL-MASIRAH has published al-Mahdi's statement, in which he explains that he became acquainted with the woman in 1979 while helping her with some research at the recommendation

of al-Khalid al-Hasan [not further identified]. One month after their meeting, the woman spread the rumor that he was her husband, that he had spent money on her, and that he was the father of one of her sons. Al-Mahdi challenged the woman to resort to the courts. The matter was concluded at that point until the government brought the woman to Sudan as its guest and assigned her a lawyer to help her obtain her rights from al-Sadiq al-Mahdi.

The statement said this is not the first attempt to fabricate crimes against al-Mahdi.

Garang on SPLA United, Problems Within SPLA
AB0604180093 London BBC World Service in English
1705 GMT 6 Apr 93

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[Text] Yesterday, on this program, we broadcast an interview with the leader of the new southern Sudanese rebel group calling itself Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA)-United. It brings together the Nasir, Nyon, and Karubino factions of the SPLA who have broken away from the original leader John Garang. The creation of SPLA-United sparked off a clash between the Garang and Nasir factions at Kongor at a time when the factions seem to be on the verge of talks on SPLA unity. John Garang himself is in Nigeria for discussions in preparation for the next round of peace talks. On the line to Abuja, Robin White asked him how he reacted to the formation of SPLA-United:

[Begin recording] [Garang] That is their business. These are southern Sudanese, they can form a government wherever they see. Some of these people are in Europe; some of these people are in Nairobi. There is the minister of agriculture, who is in Nairobi. I do not know whether the Kenyan minister of agriculture will give his post to him. There is a minister of commerce and trade who is in Germany. I don't know whether Helmut Kohl will give that ministry to him.

[White] So you don't take them seriously?

[Garang] No.

[White] They are calling on you to have talks with them.

[Garang] I am always available.

[White] Why did you launch an attack on them [at] Kongor?

[Garang] We did not. We were the ones attacked at Kongor because Kongor was under us until February when Riak Machar decided to move his headquarters from Nasir, which is known to be his headquarters, he decided to move it to Kongor. That was in February.

[White] But why did you attack them last week in Kongor?

[Garang] They attacked us in February. That was apparently not announced. So this was a reaction to their attack. The initial question that should be asked is why

did they attack Kongor in February. We restored law and order in Kongor, which had broken down as a result of Riak Machar moving his headquarters to Kongor. It was not an attack; it was a restoration of law and order.

[White] Do you regret that (Joseph Aduho) was killed?

[Garang] Of course I regret and it has been regrettable.

[White] They seem to think that after Kongor you are more and more isolated

[Garang] I can't prevent them from thinking that. Those are their views.

[White] But they say that they now are militarily stronger than you are.

[Garang] I don't know. We have no military competition with them. Our war is not with them. Our war is with the Sudan Army. So if they are militarily strong, they should take on the Sudanese Army. That is the enemy.

[White] Yes, but as you seem to be busy fighting each other at the moment, they say that, you know, a lot of Dinka are now on their side. The north is certainly on their side, the Equatorians are on their side, and that you are an isolated figure.

[Garang] That is their claim. If that were the case, then they should be talking with the Sudan Government now because the Sudan Government would talk with those whom they think are their adversaries. They would talk with who they think are fighting them.

[White] I think you would agree, Dr. Garang, that in the south with the SPLA, it is a bit of a mess. What is your solution to the problem?

[Garang] Our policy is that all the groups that have left the SPLA are welcome back into the SPLA. They are welcome back in their previous ranks and seniorities and that policy still stands.

[White] Dr. Garang, all these people who are now criticizing you used to be with you. They used to be your supporters. They have now left. Don't you think that you might be the problem and that you should now give up?

[Garang] Well, the fact that they left does not mean I should leave. Why...[laughter] why should I desert the movement which is connected with my desertion? I cannot desert because some people deserted. They might have deserted because of war fatigue, they might be tired of the war, they might be discouraged, they may make [an] alliance with Khartoum. They have their reasons for deserting the movement.

[White] But their reasons, they say, are that you are the problem. That is their reason. They say you are the problem with the movement and you should leave.

[Garang] That is what they think, but the movement is big. The whole of [name indistinct] is under the SPLA; the whole of the Nuba Mountains is under the SPLA; western Equatoria is under the SPLA; eastern Equatoria is under the SPLA. The Nasir group suits the Nasir and then they say they are this and they are that and Dr. John should go. But we are at war and we are volunteers. We

have volunteered to fight and you don't desert your post when you are in the frontline.

[White] But when you hear all these people who were your friends being critical of you, don't you think, well, perhaps I should go?

[Garang] No, desertion, treachery, this is not something unique to the SPLA. It happens all over in all liberation movements. It happens [in] governments as well. But the SPLA remains strong, remains a potent force in the Sudan and that is why the government is talking with us. If we were weakened by all this, the government would not bother to talk with us. The indication of our strength is shown by the readiness and willingness of the government to talk with us. [end recording]

And tonight, a spokesman for the Nasir faction called us up from Nigeria to say that all parties to the Sudanese peace talks are now in Abuja.

Government Delegation Departs for Abuja Talks

EA0604183893 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Excerpt] The government delegation to the preparatory peace negotiations left Khartoum for the Nigerian capital today to meet John Garang as arranged earlier. [passage omitted]

USC Chairman Aidid Arrives for Visit

EA0604182693 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] General Mohamed Farah Aidid, chairman of the United Somali Congress [USC], arrived in Khartoum this afternoon on a brief visit to the country. He was met at Khartoum by Major General, retired, Hammad Abd al-Azim Hamadah, deputy secretary general of the International People's Friendship Council.

General Aidid told the press that he would be meeting Lieutenant-General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council and of the Council of Ministers, during his visit in the context of strengthening relations between the two countries. He

said both Sudan and Somalia were trying to achieve peace with a view to establishing stability in the Horn of Africa.

General Aidid lauded the efforts being made by the Sudanese Government and people to help the fraternal Somali people during this time of trial. He also commended the hospitality extended to him in Sudan.

Appeal Issued for Famine Relief—2.8 Million at Risk

AB0704102493 Paris AFP in English 0937 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Nairobi, April 7 (AFP)—The United Nations on Wednesday appealed for 130 million dollars to buy food for an estimated 2.8 million people who risk starvation in Sudan.

"The situation in some parts of Sudan is absolutely bleak, with starvation rampant in the south," said Catherine Bertini, executive director of the World Food Programme (WFP), the U.N.'s food aid arm, in a statement issued here.

The statement said 1.7 million Sudanese had been made homeless by a 10-year civil war and another 1.1 million were desperately short of food because of drought last year.

WFP needs 130 million dollars for its emergency programme this year, but donors have given only 14.9 million dollars so far.

"We have the ability to reach millions of people who are at risk and urgently appeal to the international community to provide us with the resources we need to stop starvation on a massive scale," the statement quoted Bertini as saying.

The Islamic government, at war with rebels in the mainly animist and Christian south, has allowed the U.N. and relief agencies "unprecedented access" to famine-stricken areas this year, WFP said. "In southern Sudan the programme is now able to reach people who were previously inaccessible although security problems disrupt relief operations from time to time," the statement said. Fighting between two rival rebel factions has halted daily food flights to two southern towns where 40,000 starving people were receiving WFP food. "Food shortages are at a crisis point with cases of death from starvation reported and malnutrition rates among the highest in the world," the statement said.

GCC Ministers Decide on Damascus Declaration Meeting

JN0604160993 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1430 GMT
6 Apr 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 6 Apr (WAKH)—Shaykh Fahim Bin-Sultan al-Qasimi, Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] secretary general, has said that GCC foreign ministers agreed during their Ministerial Council meeting, which concluded in Riyadh yesterday, to hold a meeting of foreign ministers from Damascus Declaration member states in Abu Dhabi later this month.

In a statement to the Emirates News Agency, Shaykh al-Qasimi said contacts are currently being held with Egypt and Syria to convene the meeting on 29 and 30 April. He pointed out that the meeting will aim to coordinate the member states' positions on various current regional, Arab, and international issues. Relations among the eight member states will also be discussed during that meeting, he added.

Al-Qasimi said the finance ministers of the Damascus Declaration member states will meet in Doha on 18 April to discuss the economic aspect of the declaration and the Gulf Program to support development in the Arab states, which was approved by the Doha summit two years ago.

GCC Secretary General, Canadian MPs Review Economic Ties

LD0604211093 Riyadh SPA in English 1938 GMT
6 Apr 93

[Text] Riyadh, April 6, SPA—Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] Secretary General Shaykh Fahem al-Qasemi met here on Tuesday with a delegation of Canadian parliamentarians led by Senator Donald Oliver to review relations between the GCC and Canada especially in economic fields.

Al-Qasemi briefed the delegation on the accomplishments realized by the council since its establishment.

Kuwait

Military Maneuvers With U.S. Planned for Apr-May

LD0704084693 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0753 GMT
7 Apr 93

[Excerpt] Washington, 7 Apr (KUNA)—The American Defense Department announced here last night that American and Kuwaiti forces will conduct joint military maneuvers in Kuwait during the period 15 April-14 May. The military maneuvers, which are the second of their kind for this year and which carry the name "92-93 Substantial Act," will be held within the framework of the joint military cooperation agreement was signed recently between the United States and Kuwait. [passage omitted]

Oman

Qabus Receives Yemen's al-Bid; Arrival Remarks Reported

JN0604153293 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic
1300 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Excerpts] His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id today received at al-Barakah House Mr. 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council in the brotherly Republic of Yemen. [passage omitted]

Upon his arrival, 'Ali Salim al-Bid released the following statement: We are glad to be visiting the brotherly Sultanate of Oman at a time when we are engaged in joint action that has yielded the demarcation of the common Yemeni-Omani border in a climate of trust that has further reinforced the credibility of the two countries' political leaderships—a development that has set the stage for them to upgrade their relations and use them as a springboard for sound Arab action.

We welcome this opportunity to meet with our brothers in the Sultanate, led by His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id, to discuss bilateral, Arab, and world developments based on clear perspectives and a will to exploit the encouraging signs that Arab solidarity may be redeemed. We believe that such a state of bilateral relations should help surmount all the obstacles that, more often than not, have hampered inter-Arab action. We also believe that it is high time that bridges of confidence were rebuilt, and the Arab house was put in order so that our Arab nation—eager to engage in potent collective action in the political and economic spheres—may realize its global potential in a changing world. Failing to realize a clear vision and an awareness of the risks and challenges facing it, the Arab nation will be in no position to achieve its pan-Arab objectives.

I seize this opportunity to note that our two countries are bound by intimate relations that should serve as a model for brotherly states, especially in light of the major achievement of the demarcation of our common border. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

U.S. Paper's Claim on Saudi Aid To Sudan, Hamas Denied

LD0704074993 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0640 GMT
7 Apr 93

[Text] Riyadh, 6 Apr (SPA)—A responsible source has denied what the LOS ANGELES TIMES published in its edition this morning, Tuesday, in which it mentioned that "despite the Saudi Government's denial of providing direct aid to the Muslim groups, the Saudi rich send financial assistance to the Islamic government in Sudan and to the Palestinian Hamas [Islamic Resistance

Movement]." The source today told SPA that the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has no knowledge at all of the assistance mentioned by the newspaper, and that the Kingdom's government has never provided any financial assistance to the aforementioned quarters.

The source went on to say that the assistance which the Kingdom's government has extended to Sudan or the like was clearly announced by the state in official statements.

Foreign Minister Meets Canadian Parliamentarians

*LD0604205493 Riyadh SPA in English 1936 GMT
6 Apr 93*

[Text] Riyadh, April 6, SPA—Foreign Minister Sa'ud al-Faysal met here on Tuesday with a delegation of Canadian parliamentarians led by Senator Donald Oliver to discuss bilateral relations.

The meeting was attended by the Foreign Under-Secretary for Economic and Cultural Affairs Muhammad Ma'mun Kurdi.

Prince Sa'ud also met on Tuesday with Anwarul Haq, the envoy of Pakistani foreign minister to review bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest.

Committee for Saudi-Moroccan Joint Commission Meets

*LD0604203993 Riyadh SPA in English 1915 GMT
6 Apr 93*

[Text] Riyadh, April 6, SPA—Meetings of the preparatory committee for the fifth session of the Saudi-Moroccan Joint Commission started here on Tuesday under the co-chairmanship of Saudi Foreign Under-Secretary for Economic and Cultural Affairs Ma'mun Kurdi and the Moroccan Ambassador to the Kingdom Mohamed Tazi.

Kurdi pointed out that the two-day meetings would discuss economic, cultural, scientific and technical issues and confirmed that bilateral cooperation has realized many accomplishments.

Tazi lauded the deep-rooted relations binding the Kingdom and Morocco and expressed thanks for the hospitality of the Saudi side.

Yemen

Al-Bid Departs for Oman Visit, Talks 6 Apr

*JN0604124593 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network
in Arabic 1200 gmt 6 Apr 93*

[Excerpt] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, deputy chairman of the Presidential Council, left Sanaa for Muscat today, heading a high level delegation on an official visit to the brotherly Sultanate of Oman, in reponse to an invitation by His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin- Sa'id. He will hold talks with top Omani officials on prospects for increased bilateral cooperation. The two sides will also discuss issues of Arab and Islamic interest. [passage omitted]

Regime 'Offensive' Said Repulsed in South

NC0604145693 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] According to a recent opposition statement, the popular forces in southern Iraq have repulsed an offensive by the forces of tyrant Saddam Husayn against villages in Nasiyat al-'Adl, Maysan Governorate.

According to the statement, the popular forces clashed with the forces of the ostracized regime and inflicted on them heavy losses in lives and equipment. The popular forces killed a large number of the regime's troops, seized their weapons, and destroyed four vehicles.

Forces Continue 'Repressive' Actions in South

LD0704110193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Having intensified its repressive oppressions in the past few days, the Iraqi regime has arrested another group of people in the south of that country and sent them to detention centers on the charge of opposing Saddam. According to the opposition sources, also during last week, the Iraqi forces shelled areas in the al-'Amarah marshlands killing or injuring a number of Muslims who had taken refuge in those areas. In Iraq's Dhi Qar Province, too, a number of inhabitants of areas near the town of al-Nasiriyah died because of the attempts by government officials to prevent the arrival of foodstuffs and medicine.

Reports received from inside Iraq also speak of the continuation of attacks by popular forces against the Iraqi regime targets and military forces in southern areas.

Explosion at 'Kurdistan Unity Party' Headquarters

NC0604183293 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] An explosion took place at the Kurdistan Unity Party Headquarters [party name as heard] in Chamchamal on the night of 4-5 April. A peshmerga inside the headquarters was martyred.

Explosions at Airport, Opposition Attacks

NC0604190493 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 6 Apr 93

[From the "Letter From the South" program]

[Text] The brutal 'Aflaqite onslaught has not been able to eliminate the strugglers and extinguish the ember of resistance within them. The Iraqi youths are still performing heroic feats for their people and delivering strong blows to the regime bases and mercenaries. They

hold within them the Iraqi people's hope to get rid of dictatorship in an Iraq in which peace, freedom, and democracy prevail.

On 30 March, three explosions took place at Abu-Firnas military airfield in Mosul, killing 106 people and wounding 213 others. Reporting this, KURDISTANINA [Our Kurdistan] newspaper said a series of separate explosions took place in the afternoon of the same day in the (al-Ghizlan) camp.

In al-Nasiriyah on 24 March, there was an altercation between the Iraqi regime's interior minister, Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan, who is a half-brother of Saddam, and a police officer. The officer fired three shots at al-Hasan because he insulted him. Reports say that al-Hasan was seriously wounded and that the officer was killed and all his relatives arrested.

Resistance forces late last month carried out several operations to blow up regime centers and ruling party organizations in Baghdad. They blew up [word indistinct] in the Baghdad al-Jadidah, al-Karradah, al-Thawrah, al-Bayya', and al-Kazimiyah areas. According to Iraqi opposition sources, the explosions extensively damaged buildings and wounded a large number of officials and guards. Afterward, the regime's security forces circled and tightened control over the explosion site and arrested many people.

A resistance forces group has carried out an attack on the ruling party organization center in 'Ali al-Gharbi, al-Basrah Governorate. The center was destroyed and all the regime's henchmen and mercenaries inside were killed.

Rebel Radio Says Targets in Baghdad Attacked

NC0604144193 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1330 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] In retaliation against the repression carried out by the tyrant Saddam's regime against our people in the south, the Islamic revolution's mujahidin executed a series of daring operations against important government offices in Baghdad last month. This was reported by [words indistinct] in al-Karradah, al-Thawrah, al-Bayya', and al-Kazimiyah. The sources added that the explosions severely damaged the offices and killed a large number of officials, party members, and sentries who happened to be there.

Our sources said that following these operations, the regime's terrorist security forces cordoned off the areas of the explosions, placed them under strict surveillance, and arrested some citizens.

Several days ago, an Islamic resistance group attacked the ruling party's branch headquarters in 'Ali al-Gharbi in al-'Amarah [Maysan] Governorate. Our sources reported that the headquarters was demolished and all the regime's henchmen and mercenaries who were inside killed. The resistance group returned safely to base.

Saddam Addresses Group on U.S. Elections

JN0604151193 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Six hundred and seventy scholars, tribal chieftains, and personalities from Ninawa Governorate have made a pledge in front of leader President Saddam Husayn to remain loyal to the soil of great Iraq, to defend it with blood and everything dear, and to defeat the attempts of coveters and agents with Iraqi swords. The faithful gathering pledged to President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, to remain loyal to the principles of the revolution and to rally around his banner to impose the will of virtue, justice, and heaven.

Representatives of the governorate's citizens and Christian and Muslim men of religion delivered speeches and recited poems in front of the leader president.

The leader president then delivered a valuable speech in which he dealt with the recent American elections and the importance of relying on God and on ourselves without waiting for any support from anybody until God grants His final and decisive victory over the gathering of infidelity and cruelty.

The ceremony was attended by Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, chief of the Presidential Office.

Saddam Chairs Meeting of Officials, Governors

JN0604185093 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, has chaired a meeting comprising Presidential Office Chief Hatim Hamdan al-'Azzawi, Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan, and the governors of Babil, Karbala', al-Najaf, al-Qadisiyah, al-Muthanna, Wasit, Maysan, al-Basrah, and Dhi Qar. The leader President gave his valuable directives to the governors to promote services being provided to citizens in the centers, districts, and subdistricts of their governorates.

His excellency also listened to a briefing from the governors on the level of technical and administrative services provided by the state organs to citizens in these governorates.

Saddam: Nation 'Will Not Bow' to Muslim Rulers

JN0604201793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1921 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Baghdad, 6 Apr (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has stressed that the principles and teachings of Islam dictate on those who become kings or presidents in Islamic countries human responsibilities toward oppressed people. He added that those rulers do not need others to remind them of their duties. This came during the president's meeting with tribal chieftains and dignitaries from Ninawa Governorate, 400 km north Baghdad.

His excellency added: If any of the Muslim kings or presidents does not hear, see, or know about the course of events, he will lose his attributes as a king or president. The president was commenting on a song by one of those attending the meeting in which he regretted the silence of the kings and presidents of the Islamic countries at what the Iraqis are being exposed to as a result of the blockade imposed by the U.S. Administration and its allies.

Proceeding with his comment, President Saddam Husayn said: It is not permissible for us to guide others as to where their duties lie, particularly since those whom the speaker had addressed are not simple people but presidents and kings.

His excellency said: Is it possible that the president and the king do not hear about what is taking place, and that they do not see or do not know about what takes place? Those of them who do not hear, see, or know will lose their attributes as kings or presidents, and those of them who see, hear, and know and do not work on the road to goodwill be led astray from the sound course.

President Saddam Husayn urged the sons of Iraq to carry out further exceptional efforts without looking at others, and to forge ahead on the national path to break free of the enemies' hold. He said: We should focus on our course, and our course on which we focus is Iraq. When faith in it becomes more enhanced, when there is more patience and work in it becomes more active, then this is what is required.

President Saddam Husayn swore that no Iraqi will bow to any Arab or Muslim ruler. He added that the road of virtues is known and defined, the road of dignity is clear, and the road of gallantry is broad. Noting what Iraq offered to others, the president said: I do not believe that Iraq now needs anybody. Iraq—rulers and people—owe nothing to anyone.

His excellency reiterated Iraq's adherence to its pan-Arab, Islamic, and human stands. He said: We will continue to undertake our responsibilities without reminding anybody of his stand on Iraq during the siege.

INC Says Delegates To Meet Christopher

NC0604163893 Paris AFP in English 1445 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Excerpt] London, April 6 (AFP)—Delegates from an Iraqi opposition group will meet U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Washington on April 27, the first such encounter at that level, the Iraqi National Congress (INC) said Tuesday.

In a statement issued at INC Headquarters here, the umbrella dissident movement said "the agenda will include the latest developments in the struggle for democracy in Iraq and the level of U.S. support for the Iraqi National Congress."

The INC delegation will also meet with other senior U.S. officials, the statement said. [passage omitted]

'Aziz Confers With Visiting Russian Delegation

*JN0604191093 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio
Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 6 Apr 93*

[Text] Tariq 'Aziz, member of the Revolution Command Council and deputy prime minister, today received a delegation of the Russian Congress of People's Deputies led by Congress member Vladislav Alekseyevich Achalov. During the meeting, they discussed friendly relations and the historic cooperation between the two friendly countries and peoples.

Achalov, head of the Russian congressional delegation, voiced his appreciation for the Iraqi people's heroic stand and their steadfastness in the face of tyrannical aggression. He also talked about the delegation's visit to the exhibition of steadfastness and confrontation, and praised the current reconstruction campaign.

The Russian delegation is visiting Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi National Assembly.

Peres on Clinton-Mubarak Meeting, Territories

TA0604192993 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Studio interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik—live]

[Text] [Sukenik] Good evening Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres. The report we have just heard about the Clinton-Mubarak meeting indicates that at least Egypt and the United States are very optimistic about the future of the deportees issue and the resumption of the peace talks. Is there something we do not know, such as an Israeli agreement for additional measures, additional gestures, an acceleration in the return of the deportees perhaps?

[Peres] I do not think so. On the contrary. President Clinton clearly stated it is unnecessary to ask Israel for more. Israel has contributed as much as it can for the resumption of the peace talks. I think that the Egyptian president's visit in Washington shows the Palestinians that they should not insist on trifles. What are they insisting on, after all? They are insisting on very irrelevant matters, in fact.

[Sukenik] I understand from your remarks that Israel will not agree to shorten further the deportation period for those deportees who are supposed to remain there for another three quarters of a year or so.

[Peres] It is more than this. Israel is not even required to give in. There is no need for Israel to make concessions, and it is not being requested to do so. I am especially referring to the United States, which is the element bridging the Arab and Israeli positions today.

[Sukenik] Presidents Clinton and Mubarak spoke of progress in the negotiations with Syria, of Syrian agreement for full peace. Is this anything new?

[Peres] I do not think so. I think that President al-Asad repeated his earlier remarks to the effect that he is prepared for a full peace in return for a complete withdrawal, but as is known, the term peace that he uses is not as full as it sounds. When it comes to peace, he is definitely very careful with regard to the extent of peace, so that upon analysis, you can tell that this is not true peace.

[Sukenik] In other words, you still doubt and suspect this declaration. You do not view it as anything new.

[Peres] There is nothing new about the Syrian leader's declaration beyond the fact that he has repeated it; namely, he has not gone back on his positions, but there is also no progress in the meaning with which he invests these positions. I think that Syria will have to make an important move forward before we can enter practical deliberations.

[Sukenik] Sir, in the meantime the territories are being subjected to a complete closure. The closure is slated to

last at least until after Passover, when its continuation will be considered. The measures that the government is currently discussing, whereby there will be a gradual separation between Israel and the territories after the lifting of the closure—is this the trend which we are pursuing now?

[Peres] The trend, first and foremost, is to reach maximum safety for the residents of Israel. The closure is not a goal in itself, but a means. When we were all sitting down at the seder table, thousands of officers, soldiers, policemen, border policemen, and other security people are working day and night, giving up the seder night so that we can all have a peaceful and secure holiday. It is clear that the closure is a source of economic distress to the inhabitants of the territories and was caused by the security distress in which we found ourselves. The recent wave of stabbings seemed never to end, but it has stopped now, and I very much hope the residents of the territories will calm down and return to the negotiations. I know that many of them say they are protesting our occupation. Are we occupiers indeed? Have you ever seen occupiers who came and said: Let us sit down to the negotiations table; let us conduct honorable negotiations between equals so as to solve the problem, while making significant Israeli concessions?

The entire deportees issue is going to be over at the end of this year. It is an argument over time rather than principle. All deportees are supposed to return to the land or State of Israel by the end of the year.

[Sukenik] Mr. Peres, the military men too, the chief of staff, his deputy, the coordinator of government activities in the territories, and others all say that the closure is not a long-term solution. It increases distress in the short term and does not solve long-range problems. What next? Are we indeed moving toward a gradual separation between Israel and its residents on the one hand and the territories and its residents and laborers on the other?

[Peres] I do not know what separation means. In the future we will have a political solution. As far as we are concerned, the solution can emerge within few months. I know it will be difficult until we reach the solution, and the nearer we get to it the more impatient we become, the more we run out of time, and the more difficult it becomes, but despite this, nobody—Arab, Palestinian, or Israeli—has an alternative except to reach a peaceful solution. Every year that passes makes it more distressful for us.

You know, some mention the situation in Gaza 20 or 30 years ago. Gaza, 20 or 30 years ago, had 250,000 to 300,000 residents, while today it has 750,000, three times as many people, living in terrible, crowded conditions. This is difficult for both them and us. There is no solution other than the political one. Military solutions will not be to any avail today, either to them or to us.

Clinton 'Reinforces' Israeli Position

TA0704061893 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500
GMT 7 Apr 93

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] The Egyptian and U.S. presidents' news conference held yesterday in Washington was received with satisfaction in Jerusalem. President Clinton's observation that Rabin has done enough on the deportee issue reinforced the Israeli position and provided additional proof that the United States was not reneging on its compromise agreement with Israel.

Political sources in Jerusalem last night voiced the view that the gestures toward the Palestinians which had been discussed with Warren Christopher would in any event be carried out only after the Palestinians returned to the negotiating table. The gestures involve mainly the return of old-time Fatah-affiliated deportees. It is believed in Israel that all the sides realize already now that everyone, including the Palestinians, will attend the talks on 20 April.

As for the Rabin-Mubarak meeting, an official announcement was issued following the Mubarak-Clinton encounter, as had been agreed in Egyptian Ambassador Basyuni's talks in Jerusalem. The meeting will be held in Cairo, apparently on 15 April. Rabin will remain in Egypt one day only. Until that date, President Mubarak is expected to hold talks with his Arab counterparts and meet with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, and then to present Prime Minister Rabin with a united Arab stand on the talks resumption issue. Israel believes the summit will try to prepare the ground for the peace talks due to start the week after—namely, to probe the Israeli stands on Palestinian issues and to convey Palestinian and Syrian messages to Israel. The deportee issue is expected to surface during the summit, but as said, Israel regards it as concluded.

U.S. Foils Arms Deal With 'Third World Country'

TA0704111093 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
7 Apr 93 p 1

[Report by defense correspondent Aluf Ben]

[Excerpt] The Clinton administration's policy of giving priority to human rights is holding up a large weapons deal between Israel and a Third World country.

Israel wants to sell this country 14 Skyhawk planes given by the United States as a present to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] from its Navy surpluses, after they are upgraded in Israel. The deal is estimated at \$100 million.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin raised the issue with Secretary of State Christopher during the latter's visit to Jerusalem on February. The secretary of state clarified that the new administration opposes the sale of weapons to countries which have a history of human rights violations.

During his visit to Washington, Rabin requested that the administration reconsider its position. The Americans promised to reconsider the issue, but have not handed their reply to Israel.

The two-seat Skyhawks were handed to Israel in the framework of a plan to transfer surpluses of the U.S. military forces, currently undergoing cutbacks, to U.S. allies. The grant was announced during Rabin's visit to the United States in August 1992.

Initially the Air Force wanted to use the Skyhawks as training planes, in addition to similar planes in service. The Air Force announced it is not interested in the planes after it turned out that they are of a different model.

The defense establishment decided to upgrade the planes in the Israel Aircraft Industries—which has already gained experience in upgrading the Skyhawks for the Israel Air Force—and to export the upgraded planes.

Israel and the U.S. Administration agreed that the money received by the sale of the planes—after the deduction of the work costs in Israel—will be appended to the military aid budget for purchasing new weapons in the United States. In this way the U.S. industries would benefit from additional deals beyond the amount stipulated by the regular aid budget.

Despite the fact that the potential market for the Skyhawks is not large, the representatives of the defense establishment succeeded in interesting a Third World country in buying the planes, but the objection posed by the U.S. Administration prevented an agreement. The approval of the administration is necessary for the export of any U.S. weapons system. [passage omitted]

Permanent Border Checkpoints for West Bank

TA0704120093 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
7 Apr 93 p 1

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Excerpt] From this morning and until further notice West Bank inhabitants will be able to cross the Green Line into Israel and East Jerusalem only via eight permanent checkpoints. A decision to this effect was reached by the defense establishment on Passover eve.

The checkpoints will be erected in the southern entrance of Tulkarm; in the eastern exit of Tulkarm, on the way to Qasim junction; in the Janin-Megiddo junction; in the Bet Horon junction near Ramallah; in the al-Ram junction north of Jerusalem; in the Gilo junction for inhabitants from the Bethlehem area; in the Tarqumiyah junction and the Shoqet junction for inhabitants coming from the Bethlehem and Hebron region.

All West Bank residents wanting to enter East Jerusalem and Israel will be checked in these eight checkpoints and requested to submit an authorization.

Sources in the defense establishment say that the eight checkpoints will actually constitute the entrance gates from the West Bank to Israel until further notice. So far more than 150 checkpoints have been erected in the West Bank, but West Bank residents will be able to pass to Israel only through the eight checkpoints determined for this purpose. [passage omitted]

Palestinians To Work Inside Green Line 7 Apr

TA0704053093 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English* 0400 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Report by Steve Linde]

[Excerpt] Israeli farmers are continuing their struggle to survive economically, despite the closure on the territories. A thousand additional Palestinian workers from the territories will be allowed to cross the Green Line into Israel today. This will bring to over 2,500 the number of Palestinian workers from the territories allowed into Israel. Permits for the workers are to be issued by the Employment Service.

Employment Service Director General David Lefler and Deputy Coordinator for the Territories Schiffman-Ramot have been calling for reducing the period of time Palestinians from the territories are allowed to work in Israel. They have both proposed setting up joint computers between the Employment Service and the police, in order to have up-to-date information on Palestinians who have lost their jobs but continue to cross the Green Line. Another recommendation is for stiffer penalties for employers who hire Palestinians without proper permits to work inside Israel. These proposals will be submitted today to Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir. [passage omitted]

Minister Criticizes Rabin's Consent to Female Labor

TA0204113593 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew* 1100 GMT 2 Apr 93

[Text] Police Minister Moshe Shahal has criticized the prime minister's acquiescence to the agriculture minister's demand to permit female workers from the territories to work in flower hothouses in the Tel Mond bloc settlements. Minister Shahal believes it is high time our economy becomes free of the dependence on workers from the territories, adding that this dependency was caused by farmer pressure groups. Minister Shahal made these remarks during a joint tour with the finance minister and the police commissioner along the Green Line in the Sharon region.

Our correspondent Yafa Glick reports that Finance Minister Avraham Shohat rejected a demand to put up a fence between Qalqilyah and Kefar Sava, saying that such a fence would have political significance.

Palestinians 'Biggest Losers' if Talks Boycotted

JN0504083793 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic* 1435 GMT 4 Apr 93

["Analysis and Comment" feature by 'Ezra Shirazi]

[Text] [PLO Chairman Yasir] 'Arafat's headquarters have recently been at pains to give the impression that the Palestinian delegation might not participate in the ninth round of the bilateral peace talks, or that the Palestinians might drop out of the negotiations altogether.

Anyone up to date with recent developments need not think hard to discover that this is an exposed attempt at political blackmail of the U.S. Administration and Israel, through the U.S. Administration.

It is particularly significant in this respect that this 'Arafatist attempt is intensifying and getting more concentrated as the meeting between President Bill Clinton and Egyptian President Mubarak draws nearer. The two presidents are expected to meet on 6 April in Washington. The so-called expanded session of the Palestinian leadership currently convening in Tunis, and the cordon states, which held a meeting in Damascus a week ago and left it open, are awaiting the results of the Clinton-Mubarak meeting.

There is no need to think a great deal about the political gains which the 'Arafat [Palestine Liberation] Organization is trying to extort. It is probably enough to point out that the organization's attempt to use the card of the deportees in this regard will fail, not only because of the principled stands of the U.S. and Israeli Governments, but also because the deportee card has no value.

All the concerned Arab parties, including the Palestinians, have no genuine interest in being a pawn to serve the objectives of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. Nor have they any interest in boosting extremist fundamentalist movements to which the deportees belong.

However, if we put aside all the considerations related to the 'Arafatist attempt at blackmail, the most important and serious question remains: Will the Palestinians be the winners if they do not take part in the ninth round of the bilateral peace talks or if they totally withdraw from the peace negotiations? Any objective analysis would reveal one indisputable fact; namely, that it is a higher vital interest for all nations to pursue the peace negotiations and contribute to their success. The Palestinians are probably the people most in need of peace. Consequently, they will be the biggest losers if they pass up the current historic opportunity to bring about an honorable, realistic solution to their problem.

Deputy Minister, PLO Official View Terrorism

AU0504153993 *Vanna DER STANDARD in German* 5 Apr 93 p 3

[Ben Segenreich report from Tel Aviv: "Terror Continues, But 'Time of Wars Is Over'"]

[Text] It is difficult for a society oriented toward the West to combat "crazy" suicide terrorists, Israeli Vice Defense Minister Motta Gur said. The successful attacks are an incentive for carrying on in the same way, but previous experience has shown that the motivation speedily decreases after some failures, "and that is precisely our objective."

For Ahmad Tibi, adviser to the Palestinian delegation, however, cordoning off the West Bank and Gaza Strip is the wrong approach. He talks of "collective punishment," which could put economic pressure on the Palestinians. Violence cannot be eliminated by more violence.

In these precarious days, Gur has a particularly important task, all the more so since Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has not appointed a full-time defense minister and is assuming those duties himself. As Gur told DER STANDARD, the present wave of terror consists of two elements. With organized terrorism, the Palestinian-Islamic group Hamas wants to torpedo the peace talks. In addition, international fundamentalism causes young Muslims "to get up in the morning and decide to kill a Jew, just to fulfill Islamic law."

Deadlock

Tibi, who is in close contact with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat and regards himself PLO "ambassador" in Israel, offers a completely different explanation to DER STANDARD. In addition to the deportation of 400 Palestinians, there is the "bad human rights situation" and the deadlock in the peace process. The month of fasting, Ramadan, which triggers many religious emotions, also has to be taken into account. All that resulted in the "escalation of resistance in the occupied territories." Rabin is responsible for it and only he holds the key to a solution, he said.

Asked why the Palestinian leadership does not condemn the knifing murders, Tibi answered that it is "hypocritical" for Rabin to reject the PLO and at the same time expect it to make statements that help him politically. The socialist government has lost its credit, he said.

Rabin should now have the courage to tell the Israelis that "one has to talk to the enemy, and the enemy is the PLO." He should guarantee that Israel will never deport Palestinians again and make convincing proposals on the autonomy question. Tibi also sees a "positive message" from the cordoning off of the territories: "admission that Israel cannot keep up the occupation."

"No Withdrawal"

A unilateral withdraw, if only from the Gaza Strip, is inconceivable for Motta Gur: "The Arabs provoked a war in 1967. As a result, we are in control of these territories. Without an agreement on the coexistence of Israelis and Arabs, we will not leave there." The increased employment of the security forces and the moral mobilization of the population are required for the fight against terrorism. "In 1974, when we had a

similar wave, it took one and one-half years. This time, we hope it will not take that long."

Most Palestinians are interested in continuing their normal lives, and Israel will therefore act in carefully measured steps to prevent the people from being harmed, he said.

Gur admitted that the atmosphere among Israelis is worse than it has been for long time. Is the government also responsible for it? "It is possible that Hamas interpreted our peace gestures as weakness." The problem is that there are so many groups among the Palestinians: "If someone wanted to negotiate on the distribution of land or water, he would be murdered immediately."

Nevertheless, "because of his very long experience," Gur estimates that the peace talks cannot be stopped any longer. "The United States and Europeans would not permit that, and the Syrians and Palestinians have also understood that the time for war is over."

Al-Husayni May Head Peace Talks Delegation

TA0704085793 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 7 Apr 93 p 1

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[Text] Senior Sources in Jerusalem say that Faysal al-Husayni, who is a resident of East Jerusalem, may head the Palestinian delegation for peace talks when the political negotiations resume in Washington on 20 April.

The sources said that the United States and the Palestinians have been holding negotiations over this issue for several weeks, and that the United States supports this proposal. The issue was also raised with senior Israeli political echelons who supported it as well.

Sources in the prime minister's bureau yesterday confirmed that there is a proposal to appoint al-Husayni as head of the Palestinian delegation. They added, however, that so far the issue was not decided and that at this stage it is only "gossip." Senior political sources maintain, however, that contacts on this issue have long passed the stage of "gossip." They expressed their confidence that in exchange for a unequivocal Palestinian announcement regarding a return to the negotiating table, Prime Minister Rabin will express his willingness to include al-Husayni in the Palestinian delegation.

The decision to approve al-Husayni's appointment as head of the Palestinian delegation will be carried out in the framework of Israeli efforts to bring the Palestinians back to the negotiating table, and will also serve Rabin's oft-announced objective to strengthen the Palestinian peace delegation.

The sources assess that the decision will cause a major political storm, and that the government will be accused of "abandoning Jerusalem." It should be noted, however, that al-Husayni also has a residential address in Ramallah.

The sources claim that the issue of al-Husayni's appointment has already been taken up with Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, current chairman of the Palestinian delegation, who approved of the idea. Apparently the initiative does not call for the concurrent appointment of Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesman of the Palestinian delegation.

As will be recalled, the national unity government fell in March 1990 because of the Likud's refusal to include East Jerusalem residents and deportees in the Palestinian delegation which was supposed to conduct negotiations with Israel in Cairo. Rabin, then defense minister, reached an agreement with Secretary of State James Baker in January 1990 on the inclusion of East Jerusalem residents and deportees in the delegation, and against this background he supported the move to disband the government.

The first report on the intention to add al-Husayni to the Palestinian delegation appeared in the London-based Arabic newspaper AL-SHARI AL-AWSAT. The report also appeared on the Israeli press, but was unattributed.

West Bank Arab Killed by IDF Soldiers

TA0604172793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1700 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] In Samaria, an Arab from Qabatiyah was killed by Israeli soldiers' fire. Janan Asuliyah, age 24, was told to halt, and soldiers fired after he fled. The incident is being investigated.

Army Captures 2 Armed Fugitives in Strip 7 Apr

TA0704111493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Excerpt] The Army has captured two armed gunmen in a raid in the Khan Yunus area. No one was hurt in the operation. More from reporter Alan Ben-'Ami:

The two men surrendered early this morning, after soldiers had surrounded the house where they were hiding in the Khan Yunus area. They offered no resistance, although a Kalashnikov automatic rifle, a 9-mm pistol, and a hand grenade were found in their possession. They have been named as Marj Mahmud Abu-Daqqaq, aged 29, and Najih al-Hasan Haddu, aged 22, both of Bani-Suhaylah in the Gaza Strip. The two men are members of Fatah, and have been wanted for the murder of local Palestinians and for armed attacks on Israeli civilians and soldiers.

Four local residents said to have been helping the gunmen were also arrested in this morning's operation. [passage omitted]

Police Open Civil Guard to Arab Volunteers

TA0704104993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The police have decided to open the ranks of the Civil Guard to Arabs in towns where Jews and Arabs live together. In the first stage, Arabs can volunteer in Haifa, 'Akko, and Yafu. In the Druze villages of Daliyat al-Karmil and 'Isfiya, the first Civil Guard unit will start operating in a few weeks' time.

Libya Requests Permission for Clerics To Visit

TA0704104493 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 7 Apr 93 p 1

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[Excerpt] The Libyan Government recently asked the Israeli Government permission for approximately 200 Libyan clerics to visit holy Muslim sites in Israel. The Israeli Government has not replied yet.

The Libyan request, conveyed via a third party, was apparently submitted against the backdrop of Libyan ruler al-Qadhdhafi's efforts to boost Libya's standing in the world, hoping to ease Security Council sanctions. At the same time Jerusalem regards this request as a first breach in the wall of Libyan hostility toward Israel.

The United States is not enthusiastic about possible Israeli acquiescence to the request, and Jerusalem sources assess that Washington's position would be adopted in Israel. Israeli diplomatic elements asked the U.S. Administration for its opinion on the Libyan move. The United States replied that Israel should act according to its considerations, but the Israeli interlocutors gained the impression that the administration would prefer that Israel defer a positive answer to a later stage. It should be noted that the Americans were aware of the Libyan request even before the issue was officially raised by the Israeli officials.

The Libyan request was conveyed by Jews and businessmen, including elements who were in direct contact with al-Qadhdhafi. They reported that the request to permit the tour of the Libyan dignitaries was approved by al-Qadhdhafi and by the highest echelons in the Libyan Government. The request was also submitted during efforts by several businessmen to organize Muslim tourism, to include Israel and Saudi Arabia in a tourist package for orthodox Muslims.

Israeli sources said that the visit of the 200 Libyans in Israel could contribute toward changing Libya's image as a "crazy state." They said they were aware of Libyan efforts to recruit Jewish businessmen and other Jewish elements in order to pressure the administration into softening its position on the issue of the sanctions. [passage omitted]

Mubarak-Rabin Meeting 'Probably' 'Next Week'
*TA0704052593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400
GMT 7 Apr 93*

[Excerpts] Officials in Jerusalem say the planned meeting between Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak will probably take place in Egypt next week. [passage omitted]

PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat will go to Cairo later this week to meet with Egyptian President Mubarak. This is according to Muhammad Subayh, chairman of the Palestine National Council. He said that 'Arafat will be briefed by Mubarak on his talks in Washington with U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Sources in Tunis say after this briefing, the Palestinians will decide on whether to attend the next round of peace talks. Officials in Jerusalem believe all parties will come to the talks as scheduled on the 20th of April.

'Sweeping Victory' for Netanyahu in Likud
*TA0404183393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1700
GMT 4 Apr 93*

[Text] The final count for the Likud's convention and local councils in the party's primary elections has

revealed a sweeping victory for Binyamin Netanyahu. Two thirds of the 2,000 delegates will be Netanyahu supporters.

Religious Movement Plans New Golan Settlement
*TA0704053493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400
GMT 7 Apr 93*

[Text] The Housing and Construction Ministry is today opening a campaign to sell 250 apartments at reduced prices in the Golan Heights town of Qatzrin. It will be the largest campaign in Qatzrin since the town was established 16 years ago. Another 1,500 housing units in the Golan Heights are to be put up for sale by the government in the near future.

The Bney 'Aqiva movement has announced that it plans to establish a new settlement at the site of the military presettlement of Nimrod in Hermon foothills in the Golan. Our correspondent Mikha'el Tuchfeld reports that the planned settlement will be an farming religious community.

King Husayn, Queen Nur Leave for United Kingdom*JN0604173193 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 6 Apr 93*

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn, accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Nur al-Husayn, left Amman this evening on a visit to the United Kingdom.

His majesty the king was seen off at the airport by His Highness Prince Muhammad, personal representative of his majesty the king; His Highness Crown Prince Hasan; His Highness Faysal Bin-al-Husayn; His Highness Prince Ghazi Bin-Muhammad; as well as several princes, princesses, and sharifs. Also on hand at the airport to see off the king were Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, the chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, the president of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, the private secretary of his majesty the king, two deputy prime ministers, ministers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Amman's mayor, the governor of Amman, the director of Public Security, and several senior civic and military officials, as well as the British ambassador in Amman.

His Highness Crown Prince Hasan took the constitutional oath before his majesty the king in the presence of the cabinet to serve as regent during the king's trip abroad.

Royal Decree Endorses Press, Publications Law*JN0604150593 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 6 Apr 93*

[Excerpt] A royal decree has been issued endorsing the Press and Publications Law of 1993, which is in keeping with the democratic course and the spirit of the Jordanian National Charter, which affirms that the mission of the Jordanian media must be based on freedom, national responsibility, according facts due respect, and cherishing Arab and Islamic values. [passage omitted on the articles and provisions of the new law]

Premier Meets UAE, Qatari, Bahraini Ministers*JN0604201193 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 6 Apr 93*

[Text] Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir met with the ministers of labor of the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Bahrain. The ministers are attending the Arab labor conference in Amman. The Emirates Minister Shaykh Sayf al-Jarwan said during the meeting with al-Sharif Zayd his country is keen to further develop relations with Jordan.

The prime minister also met with Qatari Minister of Labor and Social Welfare 'Abd-al-Rahman Sa'd. The minister said his country highly regards the king's nationalist stands and the Jordanian Government's efforts towards uniting Arab ranks.

During his meeting with the prime minister, the Bahraini Minister of Labor Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman expressed his appreciation of Jordan's preparation and organization of the labor conference and his admiration at the state of stability and prosperity Jordan has achieved. The prime minister noted that Jordan is keen to set an example through its role and work in inter-Arab relations that should serve the Arab interests.

Iraqi 'Terrorist' Centers Reportedly in Jordan*JN3003135793 Damascus NIDA' AL-RAFIDAYN in Arabic 16 Mar 93 p 1*

[Unsigned article: "Saddam's Regime...Overt and Covert Terrorism; What Encourages Saddam To Practice Terrorism?"]

[Excerpts] The [Iraqi] regime has overt and covert terrorist organs and gangs rarely found in other countries. Therefore, it is always capable of carrying out terrorist acts abroad without being caught red-handed. [passage omitted]

Jordan is one of the arenas which could not escape Saddam Husayn's terrorist grip. It became an arena of public as well as secret terrorist action. The Jordanian authorities, which were embarrassed by the assassination of Iraqi nuclear scientist Mu'ayyad al-Janabi and delayed the relevant security investigations, may eventually be forced to change their stands due to Saddam Husayn's actions in Jordan. He established some terrorist dens and planning centers under various covers and these are frequented by Arab elements serving as Saddam's terrorist tool abroad.

NIDA' AL-RAFIDAYN has learned from exclusive sources that following the assassination of al-Janabi, the Jordanian Government felt that the ruling regime in Iraq was undertaking unusual activity in Jordan. Therefore, it decided not to allow any Iraqi to stay in Jordan for more than two weeks. In view of the fact that Jordan is the Iraqis' only outlet to the world, the Jordanian action was against the Iraqis and not the ruling gang and its dens in Jordan. The Iraqis became victims of Saddam's terrorism abroad as well as in Iraq. The Jordanian Government is perhaps aware of the story of the Abu Ghurayb camp as revealed by an Arab who fled to a neighboring country. There is a special unit in this camp in charge of mobilizing a large number of Palestinians, Egyptians, Sudanese, Moroccans, and Jordanians who are either misled by the regime's pan-Arab and Islamic slogans, or are mercenaries seeking privileges and money to turn into an obedient terrorist tool in the hands of the regime.

NIDA' AL-RAFIDAYN has learned that there are other planning, teaching, and training centers abroad in charge of training the misled or mercenary Arab and Islamic elements. Their passports bear no Iraqi entry or exit stamps in order to dispel suspicions and meet the requirements of underground terrorist activity. The Jordanian arena was and still is one of the points through which the [Iraqi] regime is running its terrorist actions.

NIDA' AL-RAFIDAYN has also learned that there are two large houses on the outskirts of the Jordanian city of Irbid. One is for theoretical training and planning, and another for practical training such as booby-trapping diplomatic pouches and vehicles and carrying out assassinations. These two centers are indirectly run by the Iraqi intelligence service through Jordanian elements. NIDA' AL-RAFIDAYN intends to withhold the information it obtained from its own sources on the terrorist centers indirectly run by Saddam's regime in a pro-Western Arab country in North Africa, but will disclose it only when necessary.

Regarding the two terrorist centers in Irbid, the sources said huge sums of money were allocated for them at a time when the Iraqi people are suffering from famine and blockade. The Jordanian security authorities are aware of the Iraqi intelligence activities, but they do not have sufficient information about the exact location of these centers, which are frequented by Palestinians, Jordanians, Sudanese, Egyptians, and Moroccans. They are a branch of Saddam Husayn's secret terrorist organ which carries out explosions and assassinations in various parts of the world. This organ deals with international gangs either overtly or covertly and before the eyes of the world and its big powers, which do not seem to care for Saddam Husayn's external terrorism as much as they care for other matters listed under the chapter of international terrorism, perhaps for obvious political reasons. Perhaps, it was this international disinterest in or disregard of Saddam's terrorist record and daily practices which encouraged and continues to encourage Saddam Husayn to pursue terrorism both inside and outside. Some countries' involvement with him in terrorism prevents them from prosecuting him as a terrorist who views international law with contempt and as a rebel whose crimes know no limit.

Within the framework of the Iraqi intelligence service's external coordination, NIDA' AL-RAFIDAYN has learned that Iraqi intelligence elements and three Britons met in the capital of a pro-Western Arab country during the past few days. These Britons arrived in that capital from Britain especially for that meeting. The sources said they are believed to be from Northern Ireland or the Irish Republican Army.

U.S. Partnership in Peace Talks Questioned

JN0704085893 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 7 Apr 93
pp 1, 24

[Editorial: "Israel's Full Partner"]

[Text] As the date set for the resumption of the peace negotiations draws nearer, and while high-level contacts with the U.S. administration continue in order to overcome the obstacles facing peace, Washington continues its double-standard policy toward the peace process. On the one hand, it declares that it is a full partner in the

negotiations, and on the other, it does everything that bolsters the intransigent Israeli position, which prevents the resumption of these negotiations.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's statements before Congress last week are perhaps best evidence of such double standards, which bring to mind the thick dossier of traditional U.S. political hypocrisy in the Middle East, and reveal the deep U.S. bias toward the viewpoints of the Israeli extremists.

We are aware that following Warren Christopher's biased statements before Congress amid the current preparations for the resumption of the bilateral negotiations, and while Yitzhaq Rabin's policies receive such unlimited support as announced by Christopher, the Israeli Government has been able to continue its traditional intransigence and rejection of any concession that may bring all Arab delegations back to the negotiations table.

After proclaiming the role of full partner in the negotiations, it was hoped the U.S. Administration would embark on this role, which the Arabs welcome, and about which Israel has reservations. However, we saw that following Rabin's recent visit, Washington turned from the role of full partner, honest broker, and fair arbiter, which it claims for itself, to the role of adversary, if not something more, after Christopher went even further in his support for Israel than was the case with the previous U.S. Administration.

In face of such a situation, we—while willing to see the peace process resume on schedule—cannot show any optimism about the results of this faltering process after President Clinton's administration showed all this political support for the Israeli intransigent and hard-line positions, and demonstrated the concept of full partner in a way that leads us to believe that the United States has turned from the role of mediator to the role of Israel's full partner, if not the Arabs' real adversary.

Saudi Arabia's al-Fayiz Addresses Labor Conference

LD0604205093 Riyadh SPA in English 1919 GMT
6 Apr 93

[Text] Amman, April 6, SPA—The Minister of Labour and Social Affairs Muhammad al-Fayiz has confirmed the Saudi Government's keenness on developing and enhancing the national manpower.

Addressing the Arab Labour Conference in Amman, he stressed the importance of enhancing the training of Arab manpower to meet the needs of the labour market in scientific, technical and vocational fields.

He confirmed the Kingdom's keenness on the success and development of the Arab Labour Organization to realize the good goals for which it was established. He pointed out that the Kingdom is still committed to its financial obligations towards the organization.

PLO's Fatah Fires Rockets at Israel

NC0604113093 Paris AFP in English 1024 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Sidon, Lebanon, April 6 (AFP)—A PLO group fired rockets at Israel but they fell short and crashed into a buffer zone in south Lebanon without causing casualties, Palestinian and Israeli sources said Tuesday.

The PLO's mainstream Fatah group said it fired the rockets at northern Israel on Monday, in its first such claim since the Middle East peace process was launched in October 1991.

But the Israeli Army reported no such attack, while Israeli-backed militiamen in south Lebanon said several rockets landed in a rocky region of Israel's self-declared "security zone" without causing casualties.

The attack was in retaliation for the assassination last Thursday of Yunis 'Awwad the Fatah chief for the Beirut region, a spokesman for the group said.

Fatah has blamed the murder on both Israel and Syria, charging that Damascus ordered the elimination of its members to force the Palestinians to resume peace talks with Israel.

The Palestinians refuse to return to the negotiating table until a solution is found to Israel's expulsion of 415 Palestinians to southern Lebanon in December. Syria, Lebanon and Jordan are also partners in the peace process.

Further on Attack

NC0604115193 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] A spokesman for the Fatah Movement confirmed today that last night Fatah fighters fired Katyusha rockets at northern Israel. This is the first time the 'Arafat-led Fatah has announced it has fired Katyusha rockets at northern Israel since the start of the Arab-Israeli negotiations in Madrid in October 1991.

However, an Israeli military spokesman denied the report, saying that the explosions heard in the security belt could have been the result of mortar shells falling on the area. He said no casualties or damage has been reported.

U.S. Seeks To Equate 'National Struggle', Terrorism

NC0704081793 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0540 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Political commentary: "War Against Resistance and Intifadah"]

[Excerpts] The U.S. State Department's decision to put the Islamic Resistance Movement [Hamas] on the terrorist list, after putting Hizballah and the Islamic Jihad movement on the same list, means that it is trying to turn

the Lebanese and Palestinian national struggle into a form of terrorism. If Hamas is a terrorist organization, it means intifadah activity is also terrorist. If Hizballah is on the list of terrorism, it means the resistance is also a form of terrorism and aggression. Thus, Israel's repression of the intifadah, its expulsion and transfer of the inhabitants of the occupied territories, and its continuing aggression against south Lebanon would be an attempt to combat and curtail terrorism, something marketable in the West.

Israel is combating Islamic terrorism for the West. This is the picture being depicted in the West. What helps to promote this notion is that some Arab regimes, such as the Egyptian, offer help and call for cooperation and coordination in combating Islamic extremism. It may not be long before a unified international front is declared to combat this extremism in all its forms. In that case, the head of the resistance and intifadah would be wanted to serve the interests of the West, Israel, some Arab regimes, and the ongoing peace talks. According to the U.S., European, and Israeli viewpoint, it is not the Zionist deportation of over 400 Palestinians, but the Arab parties' refusal to sidestep this issue that obstructs the negotiations. Washington has told the Arab negotiators to choose between the deportees and the negotiations. [passage omitted]

Terming the resistance and intifadah terrorist is an argument that conflicts with international resolutions, particularly those referring to the Zionist occupation of Arab territories in Palestine, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. Did the world forget that Israel is a brutal occupying power and that all its measures in the territories it occupies are aggressive, unlawful, and impermissible? These measures defy international will and resolutions. Did the world forget that the Zionist settlement-building process in the occupied territories is an ongoing act of aggression that is financed by the U.S. Administration? Did the world forget that Washington, which secretly stands against the return of the Palestinian deportees, finances settlement activity to accommodate what it calls the Jewish immigrants in the occupied territories? U.S.-Zionist terrorism is the only kind of terrorism—one that seeks to destroy peoples and their capabilities and denies them the right to self-defense at the same time.

Syria Says No Dialogue With Ja'ja'

PM0604150093 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 5-11 Apr 93 pl

[Unattributed report: "From Our Own Sources"]

[Text] Informed Lebanese sources have revealed that Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam told a Phalangist Party delegation which visited Damascus recently that Syria "will never deal with Lebanese Forces Commander Samir Ja'ja' because he deals with Israel, and if he stopped dealing with Israel for a while, nobody would know when he would deal with it again." Khaddam added that "Syria has given Ja'ja' numerous

opportunities but he failed to seize them. Lebanese Forces envoys have visited Damascus to persuade us to support Ja'ja' in his battle against the Phalangists but we refused and we stressed to them that the Phalangist centers must return to the Phalangists." According to the same sources, Khaddam, during the meeting, strongly attacked former President Amin al-Jumayyil and General Michel 'Awn.

'Crisis' With Romania After Lebanese 'Harassed'

NC0604124993 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0445 GMT 6 Apr 93

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] Signs of a Lebanese-Romanian crisis emerged a few days ago with reports that Lebanese businessmen in Bucharest are being arrested or harassed. The crisis reached the media yesterday when Ambassador Zafir al-Hasan, acting director general of the Lebanese Foreign Ministry, summoned Romanian Ambassador in Beirut Ion Besteliu and the embassy's first counselor for clarification. He also instructed Lebanon's Ambassador in Bucharest Emile Badran to inquire about the issue. Earlier, a delegation of Lebanese merchants met al-Hasan to tell him they were harassed by the Romanian authorities.

Informed diplomatic sources, shedding some light on this issue, note:

1. Lebanese merchants in Romania were engaged in some excesses that facilitated the campaign against most of the Lebanese in Romania. There is no smoke without fire.
2. After Romania got rid of communist rule and moved toward a free economy, the Jewish lobby began to move actively in the country, especially in trade. This lobby targets Lebanese traders, because they achieved considerable successes in Bucharest over the past three years. This active Jewish lobby is pressuring the centers of influence in Romania to confront the Lebanese; it appears to have scored a big success.
3. Through its tough measures against the Lebanese on its territory, Romania wants to send a clear message of protest to the Lebanese Government for ignoring Romania's role in the reconstruction of Lebanon. The sources explain that the message comes two years after an official visit by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz to Bucharest, where he familiarized himself with technological and industrial capabilities and the construction material that Romania could use to help rebuild Lebanon. Then, Buwayz promised to promote relations and said Romania would have a role in Lebanon's reconstruction.

The sources say the mistake was not Minister Buwayz'; he conveyed the results of his visit to Romania to the concerned ministries and economic institutions. But the

Development and Reconstruction Council ignored Buwayz's recommendations. At times, sensitivities between the two got so intense that the council exceeded its authority and directly raised issues with other countries, sidestepping the foreign minister and Lebanese diplomacy.

The sources believe that ignoring Romania's role in the reconstruction plan and failing to conclude new agreements to use Romania's high construction capabilities are perhaps reasons for Romania's reaction, which targeted Lebanese traders in Bucharest.

Before concluding, the sources ask a question that has many dimensions; it concerns the Puma helicopter deal, which is on the table of an official investigation committee: Didn't the crisis of the Lebanese traders in Romania escalate when talk about the Puma deal—the Lebanese Government bought thinking they were made in France, but they turned out to be Romanian—began to increase in Beirut?

U.S. Said Moving To Normalize Ties With Iraq

NC0604101893 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 31 Mar 93 p 13

[Sati' Nur-al-Din column: "\$100 Billion"]

[Text] The U.S. Administration is moving slowly and very cautiously toward normalizing ties with Iraq and announcing a total reversal of former U.S. President George Bush's policy on the Gulf, a policy that did its job and could no longer help the United States emerge from its mounting economic crisis. It may take months, perhaps a few years, before U.S.-Iraqi diplomatic ties are restored. But an urgent return to the Iraqi market may not be all that far away, especially in view of the fierce competition among industrial countries to clinch the \$100 billion that Baghdad must spend on reconstruction in the next 10 years.

The new U.S. Administration's approach to separating the sanctions imposed on Iraq from the fate of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and to eliminating the personal characteristics of the U.S.-Iraqi conflict are a result of political and economic calculations. Former President Bush knew of these calculations, but they became more urgent to President Bill Clinton. The Gulf war achieved all its purposes when it placed the Gulf Cooperation Council countries on the path to financial bankruptcy and tied their revenues for the next years, perhaps decades, to the U.S. economy. The United States will provide these countries with more than their requirement of various arms so that the next three generations in the Gulf will feel they have sufficient arms. These countries will feel no fear as long as they have ample weapons and as long as the Americans are prepared to use arms if manpower is not available for the mission or if population growth in these countries remains low.

The Gulf no longer faces any serious problem other than any that might arise in Washington and affect the region; this is ruled out, at least in the foreseeable future. It remains for them to address other problems: Iraq and Iran.

The political and pragmatic calculations will inevitably lead the United States to reconsider the post-Gulf war stage to achieve the greater goals that former President Bush might have tacitly defined, but did not spell out because the time was not right. Most important of these goals is Iraq's being the market that is most in need of

U.S. contracts and commodities and that is also the strongest barrier to the Islamic danger represented by Iran and exaggerated in the United States.

Events in Washington suggest that the Americans are seriously discussing Iraq's future and trying to reach a firm formula for relations with it and for its regional role. It seems Iraq's role will be renewed regardless of whether or not the Iraqi president remains in power, because it seems that what is urgent for the U.S. Administration is the \$100 billion to be had from Iraq.

Reportage on Armenian Foreign Minister's Visit

Minister Arrives 4 Apr

JN0404133993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 4 Apr 93

[Text] A delegation from the Republic of Armenia, headed by Armenian Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan, arrived in Damascus today on a three-day visit to Syria.

Papazyan and his accompanying delegation were received at the Meridian Hotel in Damascus by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', the directors of the Foreign Ministry's Protocol and European Departments, assistant director of the Protocol Department, and the Armenian charge d'affaires in Damascus.

In a statement to a Syrian Arab News Agency correspondent, Papazyan praised the present friendly relations between Syria and Armenia, the bases of which were entrenched by Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Levon Ter-Petrosyan.

He described current Syrian-Armenian relations as friendly, cordial, and cooperative, especially in terms of the personal relationship between the presidents of both countries, which is continuously being reinforced with time.

Papazyan noted that the Armenian flag will be raised atop the Armenian Embassy building in Damascus tomorrow. This will be the second Armenian Embassy to open in an Arab country. He added that opening this embassy in Damascus will further promote and strengthen the present bilateral relations in a manner that serves common interests and objectives.

Al-Shar' Holds Official Talks

JN0504134193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 5 Apr 93

[Excerpts] An official round of talks was held at the Foreign Ministry building today between the Syrian side led by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the Armenian side led by Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan. [passage omitted]

During the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral relations and developments in the Central Asian republics, particularly the Armenian-Azeri conflict. In this regard, the Syrian side expressed its concern about the recent military escalation in Nagorno-Karabakh, and stressed the need for settling this conflict peacefully.

Al-Asad Meets Minister

JN0604163593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1315 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received at 1330 today an Armenian delegation led by Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' attended the meeting.

Mr. Papazyan gave his excellency a message from Armenian President Levon Akopovich Ter-Petrosyan and, in turn, President al-Asad gave him a message in reply. They then discussed bilateral ties.

The Armenian foreign minister has, meanwhile, praised the friendly relations between Syria and Armenia, and added: We always look forward to a further development of these ties with our friend Syria with which we have, traditionally, had close relations.

Speaking at a news conference with Arab and foreign reporters today, the Armenian minister said he held satisfactory talks with Faruq al-Shar'. He indicated that officials from the two countries have been making fairly regular contacts and consultations. His talks, added the Armenian official, addressed relations with Syria, developments in the Central Asian republics, and put special emphasis on the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Regarding the conflict in Nagorno-Karabach, Mr. Papazyan said this is between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Armenians living in the territory. The hostilities, he added, are between Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabach and the Azeri military; Armenia is not involved militarily and it has no territorial claims on Azerbaijan. The Armenian Government, he emphasized, is pursuing a political solution to the problem, and Armenia has no designs on Azeri territory. We stand for a peaceful, internationally brokered, negotiated settlement acceptable to the Karabach leadership, the Armenian foreign minister stated.

Armenia is a republic with a liberal outlook, enjoys good relations with all nations, and is seeking to open embassies in many countries, Papazyan said.

SANA, AP Conclude Cooperation Agreement

JN0604162293 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1445 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Damascus, 6 Apr (SANA)—An agreement was signed today between the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, and the ASSOCIATED PRESS under which SANA will receive ASSOCIATED PRESS news reports and pictures via satellite.

The agreement was signed for Syria by SANA Director General Dr. Fayiz al-Sa'igh and Arlene Fisher, director of the 'ASSOCIATED PRESS' Middle East office.

The agreement is part of SANA's plan to use satellite technology in the field of telecommunications to transmit news items, to further spread news of Syria's political and economic discourse, and to project Syria's role in the international arena.

Under the agreement, pictures of international events will be picked up by receivers with a high saving capacity of 311 pictures and then be selected and processed through electronic computers and then printed and distributed to SANA recipients by means of high technology.

India

'Powerful' Explosion Damages Kanpur Building

BK0704090393 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] In Uttar Pradesh, a 14-story building was partially damaged in an explosion in Kanpur this morning. The inspector general of police, Dr. D.V. Mehta, told AIR [All India Radio] correspondent that the explosion was powerful, that there was no trace of any bomb blast at the site. The burned material from the site has been sent to Agra for chemical examination to ascertain the type of blast.

Dubayy-Based Indians Arrested in Bombay Bombing

BK0704031893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The Bombay Police arrested three more persons yesterday in connection with the recent bomb blasts in the city. This was stated by the city police chief, Mr. Amarjit Singh Samra, while talking to newsmen in Bombay. He said that these three Dubayy-based Indians had returned to the metropolis to assess the after-effects of the blasts. With this, the total number of persons arrested so far in this connection has gone up to 62.

Situation Normal Along Line of Control

BK0604134293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the situation all along the Line of Control and the India-Pakistan border remained normal today. Reports from across the border say that there have been clashes between the Pakistani Army and the marchers at Sehri, opposite the Uri Sector. Some marchers are said to have been arrested. The security forces are maintaining precautionary vigil on the border. The spokesman said that life is totally normal in the border areas and people are engaged in their day-to-day activities.

Congress Loss in Tripura 'Due to Local Factors'

BK0604133693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Excerpts] In the Tripura Assembly elections, the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has secured an absolute majority in the 60-member house. With 42 results announced so far, the party has bagged 32 seats. The CPI-M-led Left Democratic Front has got 36 seats with its partners RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] two, the Forward Bloc and Janata Dal-B one each. The Congress-I-TUJS [Tripura Upajati Juba Samiti] alliance has won five seats. The Congress-I got four and the TUJS one. One result has gone in favor of an independent. [passage omitted on party position]

Former Kerala chief minister and state CPI-M Secretary Mr. E.K. Nayanar has hailed the victory of the CPI-M-led Left front in the Tripura elections. The West Bengal Left Front committee chairman, Mr. Sailen Dasgupta, congratulated the people of Tripura for their overwhelming support to the Left democratic alliance.

Reacting to the results of the assembly elections in Tripura, the Congress-I spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said that it is in no way a reflection on the national policies of the government. Briefing newsmen in New Delhi today, he said the defeat of the party is due to local factors.

Parliament, Assembly By-Election Schedule Noted

BK0604134093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1135 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] The Election Commission has announced the by-election schedule for four parliamentary and 20 assembly constituencies in 10 states. According to a press release, the notification will be issued on the 19th of this month and the last date for filing nominations will be the 26th. Polling will take place on the 19th of next month.

The parliamentary constituencies are: Patna in Bihar, Ottappalam in Kerala, Jullundur in Punjab, and Palani in Tamil Nadu. Of the 20 assembly constituencies, six are in Gujarat, five in Maharashtra, two each in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Haryana, and one each in Karnataka, Orissa, and Tamil Nadu. The commission said that there are three assembly constituencies in West Bengal for which by-elections are required, but it will not notify the vacancies till the state government enables the Election Commission to nominate a chief electoral officer in accordance with the law.

Regarding general elections to the Delhi Assembly, the commission said it is ready to hold them any time. However, the central government has to inform the commission of its readiness to revoke president's rule in Delhi and only then can elections to the Delhi Assembly be held.

PLO's Qaddumi, Rao on Return of Deportees

BK0604134893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] India and Palestine have called upon Israel to ensure safe and immediate return of all the Palestinian deportees. The issue, which has become a stumbling block in the peace talks, dominated the discussions that visiting Palestinian Foreign Minister Mr. Faruq Qaddumi had with the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, in New Delhi. Mr. Qaddumi said that there will have to be guarantees in respect of the return of the deportees before the peace talks can resume. Mr. Rao emphasized for an early solution to the long-standing problem to enable the people to turn their concentration to development.

Rao: No Statement on Temple-Mosque Issue

BK0704031293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, has denied that he made any statement that the disputed structure at Ayodhya was actually a temple which was later converted into a mosque. In a statement issued on behalf of the prime minister in Lucknow yesterday, an official spokesman described the claim of the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Kalyan Singh, to this effect as baseless.

Congress Leaders' 'Antiparty Activities' Queried

BK0604133493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Show-cause notices have been issued to five Congress leaders for their antiparty activities. They are Mr. K.N. Singh, Mr. M.L. Fotedar, Mrs. Sheila Dikshit, Mr. Natwar Singh, and Mr. Chinta Mohan. Briefing newsmen in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said that cases against some others are being processed by the disciplinary action committee. Separate letters to the five Congress men issued today by the vice chairman of the disciplinary action committee, Mr. Balram Jakhar, say that the reply should come within seven days after receiving the letter.

Rao Leaves for 4-Day Visit to Thailand

BK0704064893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0630 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The prime minister left for the Thai capital Bangkok on a four-day official visit. During his stay, Mr. Narasimha Rao will discuss bilateral and other regional and international issues with Thai leaders. The visit is expected to give new dimension to economic relations between India and Thailand. It assumes significance in view of India's bid to establish closer links with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—ASEAN. This is the second official visit by an Indian prime minister to Thailand. The late Mr. Rajiv Gandhi visited the country in 1986.

Power Projects With Foreign Investments Approved

BK0704032493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] The Cabinet Committee on Foreign Investment has approved three power projects involving a foreign investment of over \$155 million. With this, the government has given its approval to over \$3 billion dollars of foreign investment in the country. Two projects with 200 megawatt capacity each are to be established in the Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. Both are gas-based power plants costing 1,300 crore rupees. A coal-based power project having a capacity of 1,000 megawatt will be set up in Mangalore in Karnataka.

Cholera Deaths Blamed on Bangladeshis

BK0604102893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1556 GMT 5 Apr 93

[Text] Calcutta, India, April 5 (AFP)—Cholera has killed 143 people and affected some 8,000 others in a state bordering Bangladesh, a health minister said Monday.

West Bengal State Health Minister Prasanta Sur told reporters here the disease had spread in several villages across four districts but was not yet an epidemic.

Doctors in West Bengal, which shares a long border with Bangladesh, had earlier identified the disease as gastroenteritis due to a lack of drinking water in the villages.

Sur said the disease entered India from Bangladesh and that regions worst-hit had large pockets of Bangladeshi immigrants.

The West Bengal administration has taken "all steps" to halt the spread of cholera, which has also claimed victims in Calcutta since the first deaths were reported in rural areas in late February, the minister said.

Iran

Commentary on Clinton, Mubarak Remarks on Terrorism

NC0704060893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Commentary from the "In the Margin of the News" program]

[Text] U.S. President Bill Clinton and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak attended a joint news conference in Washington yesterday and stated: We will confront Iranian terrorism and opposition to the Middle East peace process. It is probably not difficult to find the motives behind the U.S. President and his Egyptian counterpart accusing Iran of terrorism, especially when no new incident has taken place in the region and the analogy between what was called Iranian terrorism and opposition to the so-called peace process in the Middle East has revealed many truths. White House support for Israel, which was stated recently by U.S. Secretary of State Christopher, provides the best basis for explaining the U.S. stance on Iran. Washington has made Israeli security the basis of its Middle East policies, and it regulates its relations with Middle East countries based on how close to or distant from Israel they are. Undoubtedly, Iran's support for the just uprising of the Palestinian Muslims and our country's categorical opposition to the illegitimate and usurping Israeli regime are the main reasons for this U.S. stance and that of its mercenaries in the region. The U.S. President and his Egyptian counterpart's use of the word terrorism and the violation of international laws on Iran sheds light on much of the international policy of hypocrisy led by the United

States. Clinton's remarks that Israel did what it could to solve the crisis of the 400 deportees in Lebanon show that the U.S. President supports Israel's stance on violating Security Council Resolution 799. The U.S. initiative on convening the so-called Middle East peace talks is inconsistent with Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which call for Israel's unconditional withdrawal from the occupied territories. This initiative is nothing but stepping around international laws and paving the way for continuing the existence of the regime usurping Jerusalem. Egyptian President Mubarak's motives for accusing Iran of terrorism in the Middle East are clear and need no explanation. The culmination of the Islamic movement in Egypt puts the Egyptian regime under heavy pressure. It tries to preserve itself by resorting to inhuman and suppressive measures. The confession by some Egyptian security officials that torture was used to extract information from Egyptian Islamists is the best proof that state terrorism is being systematically implemented in Egypt. Since it lost its legitimacy, Egypt has tried to find foreign roots for its domestic program in a bid to justify its suppressive policies.

Gulf Council Concluding Statement Called 'Absurd'

LD0604155893 Tehran IRNA in English 1532 GMT
6 Apr 93

[Text] Tehran, April 6, IRNA—Iran today termed the statement of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) on the three Iranian islands as "divisive", and said it neither benefits Muslims nor security and stability in the Persian Gulf.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman talking to Iran [as received] described the concluding statement of the 46th meeting of the (PGCC) in Riyadh on Monday as "absurd and repetitive."

Warning neighbouring countries against raising any unfounded claims the spokesman said adoption of such positions by the council is "unprincipled, unrealistic and one-sided."

He said such "contentious whispers" in the Persian Gulf waterway are detrimental to public interests and security, and added that Iran welcomes continuation of talks for the removal of doubts without any preconditions.

The spokesman also expressed the explicit opposition of the Islamic Republic to the positions of the Persian Gulf Arab states, which he said are against the interest of the region and Muslims, and only serve the expansionist designs of foreign powers, in addition to distracting attention from the dangers posed by usurper Israel.

'Secret' Report Warns of Increased Opposition Activity

PM0704102093 London AL-WASAT in Arabic
5-11 Apr 93 pp4, 5

[Hamid Haydar report: "Iranian Report Warns of Increase in Opposition's Internal Operations"]

[Text] AL-WASAT has obtained a secret report prepared by "prominent religious and Iranian leaderships" which includes a warning of "an increase in Iranian opposition operations at home" and of attempts by the opposition to "weaken the Iranian regime."

Actually, the appeal made by Ayatollah Jannati, a representative of the conservative wing of Iranian clerics, urging the Iranian people and security organs to be "alert" to the risk of possible aggression against the country, did not come from a vacuum. The appeal came after the Iranian leaders had received information about various activities by Iranian opposition forces aiming at "undermining and weakening" the current regime in Tehran. The secret report received by AL-WASAT describes some interesting aspects of the opposition activities. It says that the Mojahedin-e Khalq organization—called "hypocrites" in the report—had urged its supporters inside Iran to go, via a third country, to Iraq to join the "Liberation Army," which has its headquarters in Iraq.

The organization's leadership urged its supporters to leave Iran, even illegally if they could not leave legally, and to gather at the Ashraf base in Iraq after training. The report says that information available to the Iranian intelligence organs indicates that similar calls were addressed by the same opposition organization to its supporters in foreign countries. It adds that a meeting was held last month at a Canadian university and was attended by Mojahedin-e Khalq supporters on the American continent. Ja'far Zadeh, a Mojahedin-e Khalq official, spoke at the meeting. He said: "We are about to carry out an important plan to bring down the Iranian regime. We have covered 60 percent of the way but we are in dire need of funds" in order to be able to continue this mission. After the meeting, a number of the participants went to Iraq.

The report spoke of the possibility of the existence of "some kind of coordination" between the new U.S. Administration and the Iranian opposition organizations. It mentioned an exchange of messages between Mojahedin-e Khalq Leader Masud Rajavi, (former Iranian Navy Commander) Admiral Ahmad Mirdani, and other opposition figures on the one hand, and Clinton administration officials on the other.

The Iranian report warns of Mojahedin-e Khalq attempts to obtain "important information" from within the ruling Iranian regime's departments. It says that members of that organization had "contacted three Revolutionary Guard and army commanders, tricked them, and obtained important information from them.

These three commanders are now in detention. Two of them have already received prison sentences."

The report also speaks of "movements and activities" by Iranian Kurds in coordination with "Kurdish elements in northern Iraq." It warns of possible Kurdish operations in Iranian territory and of peasants and farmers in some Iranian areas turning to drug trafficking and smuggling "because they yield enormous profits." It adds that the number "of smugglers will increase" in the border area with Iraq in the spring.

The report calls for firm security controls on the borders with Iraq and for severe penalties against officials who cooperate with smuggling and corruption rings. It urges the creation of economic and cultural centers and says that attention should be focused on that area "to prevent it from becoming a gap that grows and grows in the direction of Iran's partition."

The report also warns of the "increasing activity" of Mehdi Bazargan, the first Iranian prime minister after the emergence of the Islamic Republic.

UN Envoy Says U.S. Stances Influenced by Israel

LD0204212493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 2 Apr 93

[Text] The Iranian representative to the United Nations has said that the recent U.S. stances against Iran have their roots in the Zionist regime's influence on the American administrations and U.S. President Clinton's administrations decisions.

Dr. Kamal Kharrazi said the allegations which the U.S. is leveling against the Islamic Republic of Iran are due to Iran's support for the Palestinian revolution as well its emphasis on the liberation of the holy al-Qods.

He said because the Zionist regime is not pleased with these stances it is pressurizing the U.S. Administration to take stances against Iran.

Mr. Kharrazi stressed it is highly undesirable for the foreign minister of a country to adopt a stance against another country without having any evidence.

According to Mr. Kharrazi if the U.S. had the slightest evidence on the subject that Iran wants to acquire nuclear weapons it would definitely have offered them by now.

Mr. Kharrazi stressed the Islamic Republic of Iran is following its principled policy and that the reason for all the pressure being put against Iran is that Iran takes independent decisions and does not permit anyone to bully it.

It is to remind that in 1984 the Islamic Republic of Iran raised the issue of nuclear free zone in the Middle East and pursued it with seriousness.

Velayati, Azeri Minister Discuss Karabakh Conflict

LD0604173193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] The foreign minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan has thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its stances and humanitarian aid concerning the Karabakh issue.

Mr. Gulizade, who was talking to Mr. Velayati on the telephone, briefed our country's foreign minister on the latest news and information about the Karabakh region and the clashes between Azerbaijani and Armenian forces.

Thanking the Islamic Republic of Iran for its dignified actions in the matter, he asked for Iran's humanitarian aid and assistance in the evacuation of besieged civilians in the occupied areas.

Declaring Iran's readiness to continue humanitarian aid, Mr. Velayati pointed to our country's opposition to military solutions. He stressed the importance of Armenia quitting occupied areas of Azerbaijan.

He added: With the cooperation of neighboring and regional countries and the adoption of peaceful policies, a fair and honorable peace would be possible, and the Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared to give any cooperation in this matter.

Peacekeeping Forces Seen as Needed in Karabakh

NC0704055093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Commentary prepared by the Central News Unit's research group from the "In the Margin of the News" feature]

[Text] Following the continuing aggression by Karabakh's Armenian forces, supported by the Armenian Republic, on Azerbaijani territory, the UN Security Council issued a statement last night expressing concern over the incidents and calling for the withdrawal of the aggressive forces from Azerbaijani territory.

The Armenian forces' aggression against Azerbaijani territory, which has left hundreds dead or wounded, started with an attack on the city of Kelbadzhar and surrounding villages in the Azerbaijani Republic. Some 20 percent of Azerbaijani territory has been occupied by the aggressive forces, while over 15,000 Azerbaijani civilians are under siege.

Armenia's new wave of attacks on Azerbaijani territory, which is tantamount to the violation of Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity, has a grave effect in terms of human and material losses and has defeated the

peace process being pursued with extensive efforts by members of the Minsk group and the CSCE.

The recent attack by Armenia's forces against Azerbaijani territory is unfavorable in terms of the threat against international peace. The reactions and stances of various regional countries and even of countries outside the region is such that the fear of the armed conflict spreading to neighboring countries in the region or third countries intervening in the conflict has intensified.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, which has always supported peaceful solutions and peaceseeking methods to solve the Karabakh conflict, is deeply concerned about the recent incidents in the Caucasus and considers the peace talks as the only solution for a lasting and respectable peace in the region.

Apparently, the stance by some interested countries on the Karabakh conflict helps to worsen and intensify this conflict. This will not help any of the regional countries.

The statement the UN Security Council issued last night cannot be considered as a decisive or suitable reply to Armenia's aggression. The Security Council, which is responsible for preserving international peace and stability, should condemn Armenia's aggression on Kelbadzhar, Fizuli, and Kubatly and should send peacekeeping forces to the region to pave the path for a solution of the conflict between the two countries through peaceful means and bilateral or multilateral talks.

Majles Deputies Condemn Armenian Aggression

*LD0604151693 Tehran IRNA in English 1418 GMT
6 Apr 93*

[Text] Tehran, April 6, IRNA—Deputies from Azarbaijan provinces in the Iranian parliament here today condemned the recent aggression of Armenian forces on the Muslim Republic of Azerbaijan.

A statement read at today's session Majles session by Tabriz deputy Dr. Sarikhani, called on the Armenian Government not to injure the sentiment of Muslims by aggression against the defenceless people of Azerbaijan.

The statement asked the Armenian Government to immediately withdraw its troops from the Azeri territory it has occupied.

The statement also cautioned citizens of the Azerbaijan republic against the stratagems of world arrogance in the region and respond positively to Iran's call to restore peace and stability in the region.

It appreciated the Iranian Government's adequate policy towards the Karabakh issue and called for extending humanitarian assistance to the Azerbaijani republic.

Armenian regular forces launched a big offensive on Friday occupying the strategic town of Kelbecr in western Azerbaijan.

Deputy Majles Speaker on Armenia, Gulf Talks

*LD0704105393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT
7 Apr 93*

[Report from the Majles by unidentified correspondent]

[Text] At the start of today's open session of the Majles, Deputy Majles Speaker Hasan Ruhani, having expressed his sorrow over the recent attacks waged by the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan, stressed: Without a doubt, the resolution of border problems by way of military aggression has always been regarded as condemnable by the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said: The era of military conquests has ended and the global conditions and the awakening of nations no longer allow a country to resolve its problems by military means. He added: Armenia must take geographical and regional conditions into account. It should not embark on any action that causes concern for Muslims and neighboring countries.

Remarking on Iran's mediation efforts in resolving the dispute between these two republics, he pointed out: Today, too, we see diplomacy as the solution to this problem. The two sides must resolve their differences through political and just negotiations.

Continuing his remarks, the deputy Majles speaker, having expressed his sorrow over the statement issued at the recent foreign ministerial session of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, described it as detrimental to Islamic unity and neighborliness and beneficial to foreign countries such as America.

Mr. Ruhani termed America's attempts to portray the Islamic Republic of Iran as dangerous and a pretext to sell weapons and justify its military policies throughout the world and its presence in the region. The deputy Majles speaker confirmed: Because of its belief in humanitarian and Islamic principles, good-neighborliness, and the unity of Islamic world, the Islamic Republic of Iran will not allow any country, government, power, or superpower to intervene in its internal affairs or have any designs on its territorial integrity, not even an inch of Islamic Iran's soil. He expressed the hope that our country's southern neighbors will think of their long-term interests and avoid any action which may serve the interests of common enemies.

Armenian Offensive Said To Increase Risk of Foreign Intervention

*LD0604112093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1000 GMT
6 Apr 93*

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] With the occupation of the town of Kelbadzhar in the Republic of Azerbaijan by Karabakh's Armenian forces supported by the Republic of Armenia, these forces which had occupied all the western parts of Karabakh and had practically made Karabakh the

neighbor of Armenia, have now moved toward another Azerbaijani town, Fizuli and have intensified their offensive.

Presently there are no indications regarding the possibility of a halt to the Armenian offensive and the Karabakh crisis—which has fast become a war between the two countries of Azerbaijan and Armenia—is not only threatening Azerbaijan's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, it is threatening the whole Caucasus region and the regions's neighboring countries.

There are even reports that the fighting has extended to areas near the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Turkish Government has reacted sharply and now there are implicit or explicit talks about Turkey's military intervention to end the offensives.

Although the Armenian Government continues to deny involvement in the conflicts of the region, no one doubts that the Armenian intervention in the Karabakh conflict is the chief cause of its spread. The latest offensive has thus far left hundreds dead and wounded with thousands made homeless and refugees.

The offensive is taking place at a time that international efforts are under way to end the Karabakh conflict.

In this region, the intensification of war which has started with the latest Armenian offensive, will delay a just and peaceful solution to the conflict through negotiation and peaceful methods and it will undermine current international efforts.

The only way to maintain peace in the region and to maintain the coexistence of regional countries is through respect for international law and rights, territorial integrity and national sovereignty as well as stability of the borders—therefore there are no justifications for the offensive by the Armenian forces.

The occupation of about 20 percent of the Azerbaijan Republic by the Armenian forces will undoubtedly have grave political and strategic consequences. These include an increase in the possibility of involvement by other countries in the current conflict as well as destruction and death for the people of the two countries of Armenian and Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijan Republic has called on the UN Security Council to meet for discussions on the extensive Armenian offensive to its territory. It seems that presently the first necessary step to end the war and killing in the region is the withdrawal of the aggressive forces to recognized international borders and the dispatch of international peace keeping forces to the region.

The return to peaceful methods and negotiations is the only way of ending the war and killing among nations which have been recently liberated and which need all their material and human resources for development and well-being of their people.

Ties With Russia Said To Need New Stance on Serbs

NC0604132093 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian
29 Mar 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The Russian prime minister's visit can be considered to show movement in our country's foreign policy toward expanding and improving politico-economic relations with our neighbors. This is something positive, which no individual or group will oppose, no matter how different their way of thinking or perspective. Relations should be forged in such a way that they are in harmony and in concurrence with the principles and sanctities of our ideology, which prides itself on its fundamentalism.

Despite Russia being the largest and most powerful republic that has just liberated itself from the shackles of a communist union, it has certain characteristics that our officials should consider. First, during the "Czarist era," the Russians' links with our country were based only on attack and aggression. The effects of the disgraceful accord signed with this country during the Qajar era [reference to 1828 Russian-Qajar treaty by which Iran ceded Nakhichevan and Yerevan to the Russians] are still evident. Second, although Russia proclaims itself to be the flagbearer of freedom from leftist colonial bondage, it has assumed the posture of a militarily strong country equipped with nuclear arms looking upon the smaller countries of the former Soviet Union with an intimidating eye. It also proclaims its superiority, overlordship, and a generally commandeering and strident stance toward them. And its domestic and foreign slogans do not appear to be in unison.

Anticommunist slogans are being acted on in Russia, while in neighboring Tajikistan, the communists are being armed against the Muslims and nationalists. Although they are a minority compared with the Muslims, they are being returned to power and government! In Georgia, Russia is intervening militarily and in Azerbaijan and Armenia, it is fanning the flames of war. There are many such instances.

Third, for an Islamic country such as Iran, which is fundamentally important, the hostile Russian stance toward the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina is an important issue that our country's foreign policy cannot easily ignore. Because we adhere to certain principles and aspirations, we think the Russians' extensive military assistance to the Serbs—the epitome of "brutality and treachery" in the 20th century—regardless of the reasons for this action, is unacceptable and unjustifiable.

It is not too farfetched to state that broadening relations should have some precondition, that is, a change in the Russian stance on assistance to the Serbs.

* 'Crisis Staff' Formed To Handle Unexpected Events

93LA0014B London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Mar 93 p 32

[Text] The political planners of the Islamic Republic anticipate that, with the approach of the presidential elections and the Majles midterm elections, new unrest will occur in Iran. Such unrest could stem from three basic areas, the first of which is the lack of deep-seated trust of the people in the government of the Islamic Republic. Two main reasons for this distrust are the incompetence of the administrators in running affairs, on the one hand, and the misuse and huge thefts, some of which are occasionally revealed, on the other.

Another area from which unrest could stem is new economic pressures on the low-income strata in the society that will occur with the creation of a single foreign currency and will have inevitable social consequences. Finally, the third area is the overall international pressure being imposed on the Islamic regime, which will continue until the regime modifies its behavior on the international level.

To these factors must be added the fact that the opponents of Hashemi-Rafsanjani are searching for a rival, so as not to leave him unchallenged in the field of the election campaign. But they have not yet been able to come up with someone to enter this fight. If, indeed, such a person or persons have been found, the agreement necessary to ensure his success has not yet been reached.

No matter what form the changes take, one thing is certain, and that is that the leaders of the Islamic regime have not yet been able to free themselves of the anxiety brought on by the riots in Mashhad, Arak, Shiraz, Bukan, and other cities, and the refrain of this anxiety is: What if such riots occur in Tehran?

The vast transfers that are seen these days in the armed forces are the result of this anxiety. In any case, informed sources report that at the present in Tehran a "Crisis Center Headquarters" has been formed to make sure that the regime is not taken by surprise if anything happens. It is said that besides Khamene'i and the heads of the three branches, that is, Rafsanjani, Mohammad Yazdi, and Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, the minister of interior; the minister of intelligence and security; Hasan Ruhani, the deputy speaker of the Majles; Akbar Torkan, the minister of defense; Hasan Firuzabadi, the joint chief of staff of the armed forces; and Ali Akbar Velayati, the minister of foreign affairs, are the permanent members of this headquarters, and, according to the case, other leaders of the Islamic regime will be invited to participate in the meetings of this headquarters.

* Director of Gardun Magazine Acquitted

93LA0014C London KEYHAN in Persian 18 Mar 93 p 2

[Text] Penal Court 1 of Tehran, upholding a verdict issued on 18 Azar [9 Dec] by Branch 135 of Penal Court 1 in Tehran acquitted 'Abbas Ma'rufi, journalist, writer,

and manager of Gardun magazine. 'Abbas Ma'rufi was accused of insulting the values of the revolution and the Islamic Republic, spreading the values of the "tyrant's" time, and ridiculing the officials of the Islamic regime. Hamid Mosaddeq, poet and attorney, was the defense attorney for 'Abbas Ma'rufi.

Pakistan

Russian Foreign Minister Arrives 6 Apr

BK0704040993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said that his country considers Pakistan an important partner in the new relationship between the two countries and was sure to make a real breakthrough in economic and political relations during his visit. He was addressing newsmen at the airport upon his arrival in Islamabad last night for a three-day visit to Pakistan. He said both countries are interested in stability throughout South Asia. The Russian foreign minister said we want full-scale economic and diplomatic relations. He said our trade is three times lower today than it used to be, which is why there is a need to impart political impetus to economic ties. He said a treaty on the basic principles of relations between the two countries, which will cover all fields of relations and cooperation, will be signed during his visit. He added that our new relationship will be totally different from the one that existed during the Cold War era. The Russian foreign minister said he will discuss all aspects of promoting relations during his talks with President Ghulam Ishaq Khan; Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif; and Mohammad Siddique Khan Kanjoo, minister of state for foreign affairs. Kozyrev said he will hold talks with the Pakistani leaders on matters such as seeking Pakistani help for the release of Soviet POW's. He said he is very much impressed by the interest taken by Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif in this significant humanitarian issue. The minister of state for foreign affairs, who welcomed the Russian foreign minister, said that both countries will hold meaningful discussions on all fields for their mutual benefit. He assured that Pakistan will extend all cooperation for the release of the Soviet POW's. Both ministers said both countries will also cooperate with each other at the international level.

Fifth Minister Resigns From Sharif Cabinet

BK0604162293 Hong Kong AFP in English 1531 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Islamabad, April 6 (AFP)—Pakistani Minister of State for Economic Affairs Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali resigned Tuesday, becoming the fifth minister to quit the Cabinet of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 10 days.

Assef told reporters at a press conference here that he had resigned because of differences with Sharif over domestic and foreign policies.

He accused Sharif of bypassing the Cabinet and relying on intelligence chief Brigadier Imtiaz and Minister for Petroleum Chaudhry Nisar Ali, who is also the prime minister's special assistant.

The former minister also accused the government of incompetence, saying that he had passed on information given to him by the Tunisian authorities about a terrorist suspect who had fled to Pakistan, but no efforts were made to find the man.

Assef is the fifth minister to resign since a tussle began 10 days ago following a split in the ruling Pakistan Moslem League triggered by Sharif's moves to limit the powers of President Ghulam Ishaq Khan.

The president's son-in-law Anwar Saifullah, one of the ministers who has resigned, attended the press conference along with more than a dozen members of parliament.

Armenian 'Aggression' Against Azerbaijan Deplored

BK0604162493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Pakistan has urged the international community to take immediate steps to prevent the advance of Armenian troops against Azerbaijan. Commenting on Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijan's Kelbajar, a Foreign Ministry spokesman in Islamabad today described the invasion as a gross violation of the UN Charter and the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The spokesman said Pakistan is deeply concerned with the plight of thousands of Azerbaijan civilians who have been rendered homeless due to the Armenian aggression. The spokesman said Pakistan will extend all possible assistance, according to its resources, to overcome the difficulties of the people of Azerbaijan who are affected by the war. He said the Pakistani delegation at the UN Security Council has been directed to raise this issue at the world body on an emergency basis and to take effective steps to stop the Armenian offensive.

Ishaq Khan Expresses 'Solidarity'

BK0704025493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 7 Apr 93

[Text] Pakistan has expressed complete solidarity with Azerbaijan. In a message to the Azerbaijan president, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has assured that Pakistan will stand by Azerbaijan in this hour of trial.

U.S. Said Fueling Rift Between Top Officials

BK0704085693 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 7 Apr 93 p 5

[Text] Lahore—JI [Jamaat-i-Islami] Ameer Qazi Hussain Ahmad said on Monday that the on-going confrontation between the president and the prime minister had been created by those who did not want to see the stability in Pakistan.

Addressing a central shoorah meeting of the Jamaat, the JI Ameer said that America was in the forefront in making such efforts as it wanted to destabilise Pakistan to ensure the implementation of its policies.

Qazi Hussain Ahmad said that these anti-Pakistan forces had created a rift between Mohammad Khan Junejo and Ziaul Haq. Later, they paved the way for the confrontation between the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] and the president. Now the same situation is being created by the American ambassador.

"The present situation calls for an early end to confrontation between the president and the prime minister. We want balance of power between them. That is why we had opposed the Eighth Amendment in 1985," he added.

However, he said that Islamic provisions of the Eighth Amendment must be kept intact. The JI Ameer also criticised the attitude of the American ambassador. He said that pressure was also being extended on Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir. Pakistan was being unnecessarily linked with the Bombay bomb blasts, he said. He termed it a conspiracy against Pakistan.

Qazi Hussain Ahmad said that the killing of CIA men was also a drama in which a Pakistani had been involved.

JI Ameer also criticised Begum Abida Hussain who according to him, had tried to prove that Pakistan was providing military assistance to Kashmiri freedom fighters.

He expressed dissatisfaction over the privatisation policy of the government as he believed that industries worth millions were being given to certain persons as peanuts.

Minister Stresses 'Moral Support' for Kashmiris

BK0604161293 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Sardar Mehtab Ahmad Abbasi has said India cannot suppress the struggle of the people in occupied Kashmir by military strength and the Kashmiris will very soon realize their fundamental right. Speaking to newsmen in Muzaffarabad today, he urged the international community and the United Nations to take immediate steps to find a lasting solution to the Kashmiri issue as the Kashmiri people cannot be prevented time and again from crossing the Line of Control. He said Pakistan will continue its political, diplomatic, and moral support to the people of Kashmir who are struggling to realize their right to self-determination.

Relief Goods for Bosnians Given to Envoy

BK0604145093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 6 Apr 93

[Text] Pakistan has contributed relief goods weighing 25,000 kg for the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The

goods include medicines, dairy food, milk powder, biscuits, and 4,000 blankets. The relief consignment was handed over to the Bosnian ambassador, Madame Seljida Silajdzic, in Islamabad today for airdrop over the besieged Bosnian towns. Speaking on the occasion, the Bosnian ambassador expressed gratitude for Pakistan's continued moral, diplomatic, and material support for the Bosnian people.

Bid To Declare Country Terrorist State Decried

BK0604143193 Lahore PAKISTAN in Urdu 4 Apr 93 p 10

[Editorial: "Campaign To Declare Pakistan a Terrorist State"]

[Text] At his press briefing, Akram Zaki, secretary general for foreign affairs, referred to the tactics adopted by India to see that Pakistan is declared a terrorist state. The bomb blasts in Bombay and the hijack drama of the Indian plane are a part of this trend. To try to prove that Pakistan is a terrorist state, that it is willing to take the lives of its own innocent and harmless civilians is a savage act. Pakistan wants good neighborly relations with India. India is keen to harm the Pakistan's interests. Under such circumstances, how can they resolve the disputes between them and meet the requirements for goodneighborliness?

Nowadays, the United States speaks in the same tone as India and has begun viewing Pakistan as having been involved in terrorism. Speaking to newspaper editors and senior journalists in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan John Cameron Monjo has said that like its predecessor, the new U.S. Administration is also keeping an eye on Pakistan in regard to the allegations of encouraging state-sponsored terrorism. In the words of the U.S. ambassador, Pakistan can be declared a terrorist state within a couple of days or a few months, but it will not take more than two years. In the opinion of the ambassador, if the people of occupied Kashmir are subjected to India's tank assaults, that cannot be called terrorism. At the most, it can be described as a violation of human rights. There is a lot of talk all over the world and within global organizations about the atrocities committed by the Indian occupation forces in occupied Kashmir. But the United States does not consider it as state-sponsored terrorism. On the contrary, it is suspicious that Pakistan is providing the Kashmiri freedom fighters with not only diplomatic, moral, and political support but also material support. Pakistan has more than once invited all the countries, including the United States, to post observers along the Line of Control to report whether any assistance is being sent to the Kashmiri freedom fighters from Pakistan. In the opinion of the U.S. ambassador, this is not an easy task. However, the United States has its own sources for finding out the truth.

The United States does not sever diplomatic ties with a country that is declared a terrorist state, but, of course, it

freezes all assistance. The United States makes efforts to prevent any deterioration in its relations with Pakistan. The U.S. ambassador has said that the U.S. charge of terrorism on Pakistan is not influenced by Indian propaganda, because the United States does not believe the reports of other countries. But, it is not difficult to find something common among those who speak in the same tone. Though separately, India and the United States have not left any stone unturned in putting Pakistan into difficulty. Pakistan time and again has been saying that it considers terrorism as the most serious and heinous crime against humanity and will not tolerate it in any form or for any purpose. More than once it has condemned terrorism. During their meeting in Bonn, Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak openly condemned terrorism. Both leaders also exchanged views on the campaign to declare Pakistan a terrorist state, the resultant downward trend in Pakistan-U.S. ties, and tension between Pakistan and India. The Egyptian president assured that he would use his good offices to eliminate the tense atmosphere between Pakistan and India and through his friends would play a positive role to clear up the misunderstanding on the part of the United States. The concern of the friends of Pakistan on the intentions of India and the United States is quite natural. They know that Pakistan is a supporter of peace and reconciliation and a strong advocate for peace and stability in South Asia and that it wants to restore the age-old friendly ties with the United States to their former level of cordiality and is prepared to make every possible effort to clear up the misunderstanding. Any impartial observer will easily reach the conclusion that if India resolves all the outstanding issues, including Kashmir, then the element of tension in Pakistan-India ties would be eliminated and the misunderstanding between them would evaporate. If India signs the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, Pakistan will follow suit the very next moment. Pakistan is realistic and truth loving. It cannot imagine committing any adventurism. Pakistan has to accomplish the task of seeing to the welfare and well-being of its people which it wants to achieve in an atmosphere of peace and stability with hard work and full cooperation and the financial and technical assistance of its friends. Instead of becoming enraged over the campaign of accusations against it, Pakistan is making efforts to convince its critics that they should not abandon moderation and should maintain balance and decide which is preferable—understanding or discord and tension.

Sharif's Move To Abolish 8th Amendment Viewed

BK0604125993 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu 28 Mar 93 p 4

[Editorial: "Strong System—a Real Safety Valve"]

[Text] President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has said that the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution was created to end the state of uncertainty in the country. He has described the amendment as a safety valve and said that it has been very useful during the past seven to eight

years and that the Eighth Amendment's safety valve was developed to block the imposition of martial law in the country.

On the other hand, Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif said after a surprise meeting with the president that he has no differences whatsoever with the president and that he highly respects President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. The prime minister has also denied reports about the possible dissolution of the assemblies. The same day, Federal Defense Minister Syed Ghaus Ali Shah said the president considers the Eighth Amendment as a wall in the way of martial law, while the prime minister thinks it is prejudicial to the powers of the people's representatives. Therefore, the differences between the two personalities are theoretical and not personal. Former Senator Maulana Kausar Niazi has said that one single meeting will not help in removing differences between the president and the prime minister and that if a person loses his credibility once, he will never be able to regain it. The head of the pro-president lobby, Senator Tariq Chaudhary, has interpreted Maulana Kausar Niazi's statement as implying that the assemblies are being dissolved and if the members of the assembly bring about any change inside the house, they will be able to maintain their existence. Tariq Chaudhary has reiterated his earlier proposal that the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution must be recast in a manner whereby the president loses the authority to dissolve the assemblies but retains the powers to dismiss the government.

All these above statements, rejoinders, and interpretations paint a picture that helps us to maintain the impression that what the president has described as a safety valve has always been harmful to the system. No one can justify the application of this Eighth Amendment in the past. One cannot claim that if the assemblies were not dissolved in 1988 and 1990, martial law would have been slapped on the people. Presently, there is no threat in the air that if the assemblies are not dissolved or the government is not dismissed, that martial law will be imposed. In principle, we maintain that the Eighth Amendment was included in the Constitution as a result of sheer blackmail by the then army chief and martial law administrator-president and that it has undermined the entire fabric of the federal parliamentary system. No president in any democratic parliamentary system in the world is empowered to dismiss the elected government or dissolve the assemblies. It is beyond doubt that a system can be either parliamentary or presidential, and if Pakistan has adopted the parliamentary system, then its requirements must be fulfilled. If the prime minister wishes to do away with this amendment at the present juncture or at any time in the future through a two-thirds majority vote, then it is not only his right but also his duty to do so.

We would, however, not like to see the differences between the president and the prime minister rising to such a serious proportion that the two would not like to attend the Ramadan fast-breaking parties together and even if they did, they would not talk with each other. A

similar situation was witnessed during the burial ceremonies of late Mohammad Khan Junejo, where the two leaders sat at a distance from each other. On the occasion of Pakistan Day, the two attended the ceremonies together, but the tenseness in their relationship was quite visible on television. This state of affairs creates a bad impression about the two leaders as well as the Government of Pakistan, not only within the country but also outside. It nonetheless pleases the enemies and ill-wishers of the country and the nation.

It is gratifying that the meeting between the president and the prime minister before the 'Id al-Fitr festival went very well. But, the outcome of this meeting should not lead to a stoppage in the process to do away with the Eighth Amendment and to change the existing system into a truly parliamentary one. At a time when the spokesmen of the pro-president lobby themselves realize that the president should not enjoy the powers to dissolve the assemblies, it is essential to review the amendment and the powers enjoyed by the president under this to create a balance in the system. If this issue is resolved with the cooperation of the president himself, he would do a very noble service to the country and the nation.

Sri Lanka

Troops Attack LTTE Targets Outside Airbase

BK0604110093 Hong Kong AFP in English 0829 GMT
5 Apr 93

[Text] Colombo, April 6 (AFP)—Hundreds of heavily-armed soldiers backed by helicopter gunships mounted a fresh offensive against Tamil guerrilla defences just outside a key airbase in northern Sri Lanka, the military said Monday.

Infantry troops penetrated defences of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) on the southern and eastern fronts of the sprawling Palaly airbase in the Jaffna Peninsula to destroy rebel fortifications Sunday, a spokesman said.

He said troops of the operation codenamed "Dasa Bala" or Force-10 marched about a kilometer into LTTE-held territory and returned to their original positions after smashing rebel bunker lines and underground structures.

"Helicopters were used to interdict LTTE reinforcements. Pilots have confirmed taking one four-wheel vehicle and two motorcycles," the military spokesman said.

He said army snipers had scored direct hits on three LTTE gunmen who put up a minor resistance to the military advance. Army engineers literally bulldozed their way to clear anti-personnel mines and grenade necklaces placed by Tigers.

"There was only sporadic fire from the terrorists. We went up to their second line of defence and came back to

our forward defence line. We have one soldier wounded due to a mortar bomb shrapnel," the spokesman said.

Security forces launched the limited operation to clear LTTE positions used to harass the army bunker line in recent months, the spokesman said.

Last year the LTTE mounted a major attack on the Palaly defences at a place called Iddaikadu, killing 43 soldiers for the loss of 96 of their own men.

The LTTE is leading a 20-year-old guerrilla campaign to establish an independent Tamil homeland in the island's northeast where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated. Thousands have died in bitter fighting.

President To Attend Dhaka SAARC Summit

BK0204122893 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 2 Apr 93

[Text] President Ranasinghe Premadasa will leave for Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh on the 8th of this month to attend the seventh SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit now fixed for 10 and 11 April. Presidential adviser Bradman Weerakoon said at a press conference that the inauguration of the summit will be on 10 April and the concluding ceremony on the evening of 11 April. There will be a retreat on the final morning when leaders may hold bilateral discussions. Foreign ministers will sign the South Asian Preferential Trading Agreement—SAPTA, an organization mooted by Sri Lanka. Mr. Weerakoon said the treaty sets out the framework and procedures. Specified articles listed for preferential treatment will be negotiated between member nations. SAPTA would be a major step toward economic cooperation in South Asia eventually leading to the creation of a South Asian economic community. Mr. Weerakoon said that the cabinet was briefed on the South Asian development fund and the protection of children, topics to be discussed at the summit. Cabinet also discussed the promotion of confidence-building measures among SAARC countries. It was felt that such measures would relax tension and help to deal with controversial issues [words indistinct] among members.

Japanese Government Pledges Increased Aid

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[“OANA/pool” item]

[Text] Colombo, Apr 2 (LANKAPUVATH)—The Government of Japan has officially announced two days ago of its assistance to the Government of Sri Lanka under the 26th official development assistance [ODA] programme. The amount pledged under this package is yen 20,550 million, which is equivalent to Rs. [rupees] 12,220 million. This assistance is intended to finance six high-priority development projects designed to enhance the economic infrastructure in Sri Lanka, from 1993 onwards.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Finance told LANKAPUVATH that the Government of Japan is by far the biggest donor of official development assistance to Sri Lanka. [In] recent times the development assistance provided by Japan has contributed around 35 percent of the total development assistance received by Sri Lanka. Japanese aid commitments during the period 1988 to 1992 have amounted to approximately Rs. 52,000 million, of which around 20 percent is by way of grant assistance.

The pledge made under the 26th ODA package would substantially add to the total volume of Japanese assistance made available to Sri Lanka in the recent past and is a reflection of the close ties of friendship binding the two countries. It also reflects the decisive support of the Government of Japan to the economic development policies instituted under the leadership of H.E. Ranasinghe Premadasa. The latest aid package is for the baseline road, port of Colombo expansion (stage 4), transmission system augmentation and development, the Sri Lanka-Japan friendship bridge, regional telecommunications, and greater Colombo water supply systems projects.

U.S. Aid for Market Development Welcomed

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[Editorial: “Welcome Assistance”]

[Text] The United States Information Service in Colombo (USIS) said in a news release issued on Wednesday that the U.S. is giving Sri Lanka 3 million dollars more to further develop capital markets here. That is a tidy Rs. [rupees] 138 million at current rates of exchange which will, no doubt, further the strategy of making the private sector the primary engine of economic growth.

Although the country has made considerable economic progress in the years since the 1978 liberalisation, there is a great deal of distance left to cover if we are to achieve the status of a newly industrialised country (NIC) by the turn of the century. GDP [gross domestic product] growth of 6 percent and less will not take us there within seven years and no amount of rosy image making will change that reality.

The Premadasa administration, even more than its predecessor, has struck out boldly in doing what must be done to speed the country's development on the back of a pragmatic private sector oriented thrust. The privatisation of the management of the state-owned plantations is perhaps the best example of taking the bull by the horns despite the political risks such action entailed. Revenue constraints have compelled the restriction of government's role in the development process to providing the necessary infrastructure, both fiscal and physical, to enable the private sector to efficiently get on with the job. This is exactly what President Premadasa is doing. There is no escaping the fact that the government lacks the cash to pump massive capital tranches [as published] into the economy and both foreign and local

investment must be mobilised to keep the development and production wheels rolling.

This is what capital market development is all about. A vigorous stock market is essential to attract investment into listed companies and the U.S.-backed capital market development project, which has been on stream for the last four years, has contributed substantially to the very favourable developments visible in this sphere in recent years. Gone are the days when the share market, run for nearly a century by the Colombo Brokers Association (CBA), logged about a dozen transactions a week. Sometimes they were even fewer! It seems unbelievable that this was the case from the time the land reforms saw the quoted plantation companies, once the mainstay of the market, out of the share list. Mr. Ronnie de Mel deserves much of the credit for pushing the private sector to replace the CBA's callover system with a modern stock exchange. Various incentives granted since then have attracted thousands of local and foreign investors into a market which not long ago had only a few hundred players. Foreign investment funds and foreign brokers are now part of Colombo's stock market scene and stockbroking is now big business.

Some of the major developments that were possible because of USAID's capital market development project was the setting up of the central depository system (CDS) that has cut out laborious documentation from share market transactions. It was not very long ago when the old methods could not cope with a vastly expanded transaction volume and brokers were loaded with a sea of paper and angry investors demanded at least rudimentary service. Many of those wrinkles have now been ironed out thanks to the CDS.

In addition to helping to modernise the stock market here with assistance to the Colombo Stock Exchange, the USAID project has been most helpful in improving the vital regulatory mechanism. The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has benefited substantially from this project and Mr. Stanley Jayawardene, the SEC chairman, is on record conveying the commission's appreciation of the help received. Investor education has been one vital area in which U.S. funding has been invested.

Although much has been achieved, there is lot more ground to cover and continuing assistance for the development of our capital markets is most welcome. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), in addition to USAID, has also been of considerable help to Sri Lanka's capital market development. Investor awareness and the potential for profit which attracted so many new players into the Colombo market has helped listed companies to increase capital raised through new stock issues from Rs. 7 million in 1990 to Rs. 1.3 billion last year!

All this is to the good. But the fact remains that there are less than 200 companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange at present. The regulatory mechanism, though

infinitely better than it used to be, can be further tightened. It is indeed good news that the U.S. will help us with more money to do what is necessary to develop a vigorous and properly regulated capital market.

India To Share Satellite Data

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[Text] An Indian team will soon visit Colombo to choose a site for an institute of technology on the lines of the popular and prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, Cabinet spokesman Ranil Wickremasinghe said yesterday. He told the press at the weekly briefing at Gramodaya Mandalaya that the proposed institute of technology was discussed at the first meeting of the Indo-Sri Lanka Sub-commission on Science and Technology in New Delhi on February 5.

The Sri Lanka Institute of Technology will run diploma and other special courses to upgrade technical staff employed in state and private sectors.

"We want to start off with an impact," Mr. Wickremasinghe said and added: "The doctoral courses which need high investment will be taken later."

He said the Indian authorities agreed to make their satellite data on weather and fish concentrations available to Sri Lanka to assist in the fields of bio-technology, particularly the biological control of malaria and filaria, pest control and tissue culture.

India has also offered to help set up computer-communication network in Sri Lanka and to grant access to their own and foreign science and technology data bases.

"The meeting also identified areas where Lankan professionals and scientists in universities and the private sector could be trained in Indian state and private sector laboratories," Mr. Wickremasinghe said.

Singapore Telecom Invests in Communications

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[Text] Singapore Telecom will invest in a proposed build-on-operate-transfer project in collaboration with another information technology giant, A T & T, in Sri Lanka shortly. The spokesman for the Board of Investment in Sri Lanka told LANKAPUVATH [that] Singapore Telecom, a relatively new entrant on the Sri Lankan scene, has already made investments in four companies, all in information technology and its related industries. The first of its projects, Lanka Communications Services Private Limited, operates and markets domestic and overseas (?packet) switching data services. Singapore Telecom is also associated with the 931-million-rupee project for cellular mobile telecommunication or voice transmission.